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A REVIEW

OF
"UNITARIAN VIEWS,"

AS SET FORTH IN A

PUBLISHED REPORT OF A COMMITTEE

OF THE CONFERENCE OF

WESTERN UNITARIAN CHURCHES,

ASSEMBLED IN LOUISVILLE, MAY 1, 1854.

BY REV. HENRY M. DENISON, A.M.

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PREFACE.

THIS little work was originally intended for a contribution to the Protestant Episcopal Quarterly Review, but the delay incident upon the issue of a series of articles in a quarterly publication, has determined the author to adopt the present method. This statement will, it is hoped, serve as an explanation of the use of the editorial "we" throughout, which might otherwise seem incongruous with the signature of a private individual, and also for any latitude of style which may be discovered or fancied in the progress of the review.

In presenting this subject to the public, it may be necessary at the outset to inform those not conversant with ecclesiastical history, of the origin and phases of the opinions upon which strictures herein are made. Unitarianism is a name adopted in modern times to express the opinion of those who, while acknowledging the Bible to be a divine revelation, deny the doctrine of a Trinity, and the other great doctrines consequent upon it. This belief is not without a history, though its shapes are Protean, and, as will appear in this treatise, those who profess it in our own day, and even in this country are far from being agreed upon its main tenets. All indeed of its professed adherents from its incipency to the present day, have been unanimous upon one point, the denial of the essential *deity* of Christ and the Holy Ghost, but who Christ was, and what were his nature, position and office in the divine government of men, has always been a subject of ques-

tion and uncertainty among those who will not allow him to be God. That there was a looseness of expression among some of the earlier Christian writers upon this subject, we are not prepared to deny, nor need we be surprised at this, when we know that the various churches of Christendom had not yet met to determine what was the general opinion upon the subject, and even the number and names of the books of the Bible itself were considered open questions so late as the fourth century. Even before the council of Nice however, there is no difficulty in showing that the faith of the Church was the same from the Apostles' days that it is now, and this notwithstanding the very positive assertions of the author or authors of "Unitarian Views" to the contrary. That the terminology used to express what we mean by a Trinity was not identical with ours, we freely admit, but the ideas upon the subject were substantially the same which the Catholic Church has always held, and the fathers of the Nicene council had but to combine and bring to a focus the rays of light that beamed from the pages of those who preceded them. That is, to guide them as to the language of the creed that goes by their name, much of which was taken from older creeds and formularies then in use. The doctrine itself was not revealed by fathers, Apostolical or primitive, but it "may be proved by most certain warrant of Holy Scripture," and for that reason alone we hold it. The name "Unitarian" is no more scriptural than its antagonist term, and its adoption shows that it could not have been the primitive belief, for no one would ever have thought of denominating himself a Unitarian unless the belief in a Trinity had already existed, just as no set of men would have termed themselves anti-Masons before the existence of Masonry. The name too, is in itself a gross assumption, that those alone who thus call

themselves, held to the unity of God, whereas no writer of acknowledged authority has ever avowed himself a tri-theist, and to do so would ensure the prompt expulsion of any minister from any orthodox church with which we are acquainted. And if this statement be true without variation in a single instance in the whole church for eighteen centuries, we can by no means concede to Unitarians the exclusive monopoly of the revelation that "the Lord our God is one Lord." We believe in the Unity of God as firmly as any Unitarian of them all, both from the distinct and sure declarations of the Bible, and from the nature of the case rendering it logically impossible that God can be more than one. Yet, as will appear from the following pages, we are entirely within the limits of Scripture truth in asserting that there are three Persons though but one God. This doctrine, held rather by the tacit consent than the published agreement of the anti-Nicene church, was never before so overtly attacked, save by acknowledged heretics, as by Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria in the beginning of the fourth century. He seems to have been a man of ability and firmness, but rash, headstrong and conceited. Taking exception to some statements of Alexander his bishop, upon the nature of Christ, he stated his own views in opposition to them, for which he was condemned, and as we should say, degraded from the ministry as a heretic. He appealed however to some of the neighboring bishops, and by his artful representations, succeeded in getting the decision of his own bishop reversed. The breach thus was greatly widened, until it became matter of consequence to the whole church, and the Roman empire itself, still glorious with a twilight lustre, was disturbed by the dissensions of the belligerent parties. The Emperor Constantine, already converted to Christianity, and a sincere though not entirely blameless man, after in

vain attempting to reconcile the disputants, summoned the first General Council at Nice, A. D. 325, composed of some three hundred bishops, to consider the question at issue. In the decision of that council the Christian world, with occasional exceptions, have acquiesced ever since.

Arius and his friends indeed gained subsequently a temporary advantage, and those were dark days for the church and for the truth, but his triumph was short-lived, and he only succeeded in transmitting a motley heritage of errors to small parties of men, who ever and anon have seized upon portions or the whole of his creed, and who have never been acknowledged as included in the communion and fellowship of the visible church. Some of them indeed have demonstrated their sincerity by the blamelessness of their lives, and have made more converts by their morality than by their arguments, but they have no right to complain if those who differ from them upon vital doctrines of the revelation of God, should refuse to identify and confound morality and Christianity. Arius denied that Christ was God, but he regarded him as the highest of created beings. Neither did he believe him to be a man, but that he had only a human body of which an exalted angel or "Aeon," called the Son of God, was the soul. After the death of this great heresiarch, centuries passed away during which the Catholic faith as it had been determined upon at Nicea and settled at subsequent councils held at Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon, continued to be the established belief of the church. In the sixteenth century arose Lelius Socinus who seems to have been a learned and good man, but whose mind had become, from his hatred of the tenets of Rome, unsettled upon the subject of a Trinity. He seems however, to have had no desire to proselyte others to his own opinions, but upon his decease, his papers fell into the

hands of his nephew Faustus Socinus, who carried out to its legitimate consequences, the inchoate system of the uncle, and published a progressive improvement upon Arius, which has found many adherents. He denied that Christ had any existence at all before his birth of the Virgin Mary, or that he was more divine than any other man, but as a reward for his excellent conduct in living, teaching and dying, he was exalted to great honor, and placed before all creatures.

From him, those who deny the divinity of Christ, have been very commonly termed Socinians, though they have been by no means unanimous in their adherence to the opinions of him from whom they derived their name. The next great leaders of this party appeared in England during the last century, and they distinguished themselves by "thought, investigation, and progress," eclipsing those both of Arius and Socinus. Dr. Priestly and Mr. Belsham not only denied the pre-existence of Christ, but also his subsequent exaltation. According to them he was only a wise and good man, and he never became anything else. He offers no intercession for us—it is idle to address our prayers to him,—his blood speaketh no better things than that of Abel—he occupies no mediatorial throne—he has no rewards to bestow, and can inflict no punishment.

Similar doctrines have pervaded the rationalistic schools of Germany, and have been refined in the crucibles of hyper-criticism and false philosophy, until not only the truths of the Bible, but common sense also has been sublimated, and gone off into the viewless air, and the German Churches are but now awaking to a sense of their destitution of religion as well as a Trinity. From England we trace this many-headed belief across the Atlantic to New England, and in the hands of Dr. Channing and his coadjutors, it is moulded into still a different

form; and what does the unsuspecting reader imagine it to look like now?

Why, so far as we understand it, the view of Dr. Channing (which is adopted in substance by the author of "Unitarian Views,") is precisely accordant with that presented by Arius at the Nicene Council and condemned! Mr. Belsham, Dr. Priestly, German Philosophers, and Faustus and Lælius Socinus, all have been skipped over for a return to the "old paths," and yet we are gravely asked in the body of the work, which we feel called upon to review, "Is such a tribunal (the council of Chalcedon) a fit authority over the faith of American Christians in 1854?"

It seems that all the light and heroism, which have been accumulating among Unitarians "appealing from the creeds of men" for fourteen centuries have gone for nothing, and that after degrading the Son of God in all things to a level with our own humanity, it was found necessary in this country to reinstate him in those honors of which even Arius had scrupled to deprive him. It is to be devoutly hoped that while his star is in the ascendant, it may mount in another generation to that pure empyrean which is its home according to the word of that eternal truth from which the distinguished founder of Unitarianism in the fourth century first drew and then corrupted his faith. For Arius was once an orthodox Christian man. He had perhaps sat with the simplicity of a child at the feet of the Redeemer, and he was instructed in the ancient creed of his Church, which will be given in the Review, in the holy verities which he subsequently denounced, and whose adherents he persecuted. But he cut loose from the moorings where he could have outridden the storm, and drifted with his followers upon the trackless and shoreless sea.

H. M. D.

A Review of "Unitarian Views."

CHAPTER I.

DOCTRINE OF A TRINITY.

IN the month of May, 1854, assembled in the city of Louisville, Ky., the "Conference of Western Unitarian Churches," for the promotion of the objects of the society thus represented. During the session of the Conference at St. Louis, the preceding year, a highly respectable committee was appointed, consisting of "Henry Pirtle, William G. Eliot, and John H. Heywood," for the purpose of considering and reporting upon the following resolutions, which had been introduced by a member of the body:—

"As there is misunderstanding of the views of Unitarian Christians on important subjects, it is deemed proper to make some declaration in reference thereto ;

"Resolved, That we regard Jesus Christ not as a mere inspired man, but as the Son of God; the messenger of the Father to men, miraculously

sent; the mediator between God and man; the Redeemer of the world. That we regard the miracles of the New Testament as facts upon which the gospel is based."

Upon the report of this committee, at the session of the Conference at Louisville, it was

"Resolved, That we have heard, with much profit, the Report of Judge Pirtle, and that it be referred to the Executive Committee to be printed.

"Resolved, however, That under our organization, as the Conference of Western Unitarian Churches, we have no right to adopt any statement of belief as authoritative, or as a declaration of Unitarian faith, other than the New Testament* itself, which is the divinely authorized rule both of faith and practice."

It is understood that there were differences of opinion in the Conference, even concerning the very moderate declaration of belief contained in the resolution and fully developed in the Report. And no wonder. When men cease to hold to the "Head, even Christ," they are necessarily blown about by every wind of doctrine, and the fundamentals of Christian belief cease to be a foundation upon which they can unite.

* Do they reject the Old Testament? It would seem so. It is astonishing that Unitarians should lay so much stress upon the New Testament. They will find much less exceptionable warrant for their system in the Old.

It is by no means remarkable that this Conference had no right to adopt "any statement of belief as authoritative," and it would be very difficult to find any other Conference, or representative body of the Unitarians in the world, that should venture to do so. The thing has been more than once attempted in England as a voluntary matter, but, to require a subscription *ex animo*, to any symbol less loose and comprehensive than the above quoted resolutions, would, no doubt, be the signal for the prompt dissolution of the sect. Quite pertinent to this resolution, disclaiming the authority over the Unitarians, of the one passed at St. Louis the previous year, and the Report of the committee thereupon, as a symbol of their belief, is a resolution of a similar body of that persuasion, held lately in Baltimore, refusing to adopt a Report because it contained "a simple avowal of belief in the supernatural origin and superhuman authority of the Christian Religion." This want of symbols, upon which all can unite, is deeply felt by some of the more serious thinkers among themselves,—and by none, as we may gather from the Report before us, more deeply than by the committee appointed last year at St. Louis. The Christian Register, a Unitarian paper, ventures upon a loud utterance of its thoughts: "The experiment of no Church," it complains, "can

never succeed. Extreme individualism is suicidal. What is Unitarianism? The world has a right to know this. What is there in which we all agree? Let it not be one thing in Boston, another in New York, another in Philadelphia, and another in St. Louis. It is, if it is anything, *quod ubique et ab omnibus creditur*. We want a Church, greater union, concentration, and consistency of action. We want a book of our Church, not authoritative, but declaratory, that we may have some written representative before the world. *-We must have more thorough and efficient organization."*

It is to be regretted that the Conference at Louisville could not agree, as an expression of their belief, upon the very modest resolutions referred to the committee the year before by the Conference at St. Louis—not the Report of the committee, but the resolutions upon which they subsequently reported. Their Report, notwithstanding the mildness and general propriety of its tone, is, as will presently appear, so far at variance with what the world recognizes as the orthodox faith, that it could not well be worse. At least, it denies, or leaves out, all that is worth contending for as peculiar to Christianity, all that distinguishes it from Judaism, or (as a doctrinal system) from Mahometanism.

But the *resolution* has so demure and orthodox

an air, and accords so well with the simplest of our symbols, the Apostles' creed, that without the explanation of the subsequent Report, sincere but unenlightened Christians might regard it as a draught from the fountain of eternal truth. "Why, the Unitarians of the west have published that they believe Jesus not to be a mere man, but the Son of God! And, not only so, but they say he is the mediator between God and man, the Redeemer of the world. Can you possibly think there is anything so very wrong and horrid in their system after this?" Such are the exclamations that have been made by more than one over this gilded ashes, and those who read the report, and saw through the glittering integument, were obliged to solace themselves with the melancholy and pious hope, that they who could not unite, even upon this skeleton of Christian doctrine, might possibly be farther advanced in the Christian faith than the poor symbol they had rejected. In one particular, the Report goes even beyond the resolution, and expresses a belief of the "divinity" of Jesus Christ, and, we were unwary enough ourselves to be pleased with this expression, till a little farther on, we met with an equally explicit denial of his deity. Unitarianism now, after passing through many phases, is substantially what Arius left it, so far as it has any fixed principles at

all; and they who were rejoicing over the resolution, will be astonished to find in entire consistency with its wording, the following doctrines denied without scruple by the able committee in the very Report that was listened to with so much "profit" by the fathers of "the Western Unitarian Churches," convened at Louisville, who still were not prepared to pin their faith to their committee's sleeve. We are furnished by this Report with a categorical denial of these articles of the Christian faith: the deity of Christ, the humanity of Christ, the deity and personality of the Holy Ghost, the atonement of Christ, and original or birth sin.* It seems hardly necessary to pause here and ask any Christian reader of the Bible—What, then, have we left, that you want or care for? These great doctrines being canceled, what part of the Christian revelation would take you to the stake? Its history? No man was ever burned for believing a history. Its morality? No man was ever put to death for being good, and loving his neighbors and doing them every act of kindness in his power. Rome herself would not burn you for that, and you would be simply a fool to let your belief in an ancient history deprive you of life. But I err. The unity

* With the views of the committee upon the miracles of the Bible, and also the report upon Sunday Schools, bound in the same volume with "Unitarian Views," it is not our purpose to interfere.

of God is still retained in this report, in common with many ancient heathen philosophers, the Jew, the Mahometan, the Parsee, and our North American Indians, and if a Deity so abstract and barren could excite sufficient enthusiasm, men might be willing to burn for the belief that God is great and Jesus is his prophet!

The very commencement of this Report, places its authors, and those who adopt it as the expression of their faith, in a position of avowed antagonism to the Christian world. In the act of disclaiming fellowship with those who refuse to honor Christ, it "rejects the authority of man, and turns with reverence and trust to what is taught by God." "We reject the creeds taught by other men, because we have the same revelation that they had," etc. A plain man might be disposed to ask of the authors of this Report, whether they are the only men living, through eighteen centuries of incessantly developing Christian life, who "turn with reverence and trust to what is taught by God?" Have none of their predecessors or contemporaries had access to "the same revelation" that the ancient fathers had, by which to judge of the consistency of their creeds with the Bible? Are the rest of mankind so wanting in candor, in courage, and in intellectual acumen, that ninety men out of every hundred in Christendom, adopt these creeds

to live by and die by, while you, alone possessing the requisite degree of such mental and moral endowments, reject those creeds as falsifying the word of God? Surely the overwhelming majority of men, as wise, as good, as bold, as disinterested, and as well informed as themselves, might induce them to set forth, with great self-distrust, their rejection of opinions in which so many concur.

We might, indeed, call upon Unitarians to agree upon something in which they *can* unite—something that will be the same in Boston, Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore, St. Louis, and Louisville—something that will show the world what they do believe, before we put ourselves to the trouble of weighing for the public the merits of this Report. The “Unitarian Views,” set forth in the work before us, cannot be said to be the views of Unitarians in even one of the above-named cities. We cannot learn from it even what the Unitarians of Louisville believe. Still less are we at liberty to regard it as the exponent of the opinion of the “Western Unitarian Churches,” the body before whom the Report was read upon the momentous subject that it treats.

This Report goes forth to the world simply as containing the views of the three gentlemen composing the committee, the Conference having listened to it with “profit,” but refusing to adopt

it or anything else as "authoritative." Be it known, therefore, to all the world, that these gentlemen, assembled as a committee, in May last, in the city of Louisville, "reject the authority of man," and "reject the creeds made by other men." This reminds us, irresistibly, of our naval hero, Paul Jones, with three little ships, putting Great Britain in a state of blockade. But, the world has the Report now, and if it contained the "views" of one individual instead of three, (it would be a curious and interesting inquiry whether the committee of three were unanimous in their adoption) they might still do mischief, and, at all events, are fair food for criticism.

In order to furnish a precedent for this wholesale rejection of "the creeds of other men," by three persons, in the act of forming a creed for themselves, which they subsequently publish, with the high-sounding title, "Unitarian Views," *i. e.* the views of three Unitarians, allusion is made to the fact, as stated, that "the General Conference of the Protestant Episcopal Church, held at Wilmington, in October, 1786, rejected a creed that was a part of the whole Christian world for centuries," viz: the Athanasian creed. "Here is a memorable instance where the authority of ages and of generations that filled the world, was made to give way to thought, to investigation, to progress." This

assertion we consider "a memorable instance" of the ease with which a historical fact may be perverted. The Athanasian creed was never rejected by the Protestant Episcopal Church. It was purposely omitted from the American Prayer Book, partly because, in doctrine, it sets forth nothing but what is contained in the Apostles' and Nicene creeds, which are retained, and partly because of the anathema pronounced at its close upon all who do not believe it. The omission was, then, one of ten thousand instances that modern Christianity affords of "progress" in religious toleration, and not at all of progress in opinion; nor could the American Episcopal Church have hoped for ordination from the English bishops, if in any essential particular she had departed from the Catholic faith.

Another example occurs in history, of the omission both of this creed and the Nicene, long before such a degree of "progress in thought and investigation" had been attained, and that, too, by the authority of a council; but, no one supposed that it was intended to show that the Church, by which the omission was made, designed to reject the doctrines of the other creeds. "In the eighth century, the council of Forojulio, in Italy, prescribed the use of no other creed but that of the Apostles' ;" but this is understood to have been a mere declaration that the Apostles' creed was

substantially the same as the others, and, therefore, sufficient; and so it would have been, according to its original intention, but for the rise of heresies, giving occasion for greater explicitness.

On page 13 of the Report, this war against "the creeds of men," concentrates the forces of metaphysics upon the doctrine of the Trinity: "We cordially believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and all that the Scriptures teach in regard to them. But, while we thus believe, we [*i. e.* the committee of three] reject the doctrine of a Deity in three persons; because it is not revealed in the Scriptures." Then follow a number of equally confident assertions, upon which the Christian world has long ago decided and pronounced a directly opposite opinion. We do not propose, in our examination of the "views" of these gentlemen, to explain the nature of the Godhead. The great question is, (as we shall see hereafter,) does Scripture teach a Trinity? As treating the nature of the infinite God, it is quite reasonable to suppose that finite powers can but partially understand the doctrine in question. The Infinite alone can comprehend his own nature. If he have condescended in his word, to make it as plain as, perhaps, it could be made to finite minds, all that we can do, all that believers in this great doctrine can be required to do, is to collect the scattered rays of

revelation and throw them athwart this bottomless abyss, and then assign familiar terms to express, in their poor way, all that they can see faintly revealed in the obscurity. For, obscure to us the Deity is, in his own nature, by reason of the very light unapproachable, in which he dwells, where no man hath seen or can see him. This affixing of terms to that which, though clearly revealed, is, of itself, *indefinable*; and, the answering of objections, partly by such approximating terms themselves, and partly by more elaborate arguments, is precisely what the ancient Christians have labored to do in the language of their creeds, having been more solicitous for things than for names, and careful only to express themselves by their symbols, in such words that no man within the pale of the Church might presume to deny, that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Hence, the term *person*, so much excepted to in the Report before us, concerning which we have only to say, if you like it not, furnish us with a better and we will adopt it. It is, indeed, and so would any other human word be a feeble expression of the thing to which it is applied, but it serves as a standing exposure of those who have departed from the Catholic faith, and so we receive it.

Accordingly, we are not surprised to find that the Report opens the contest by an attack upon

this word. There is, however, a material difference in the sense in which the two parties, the world and the Arians, understand and use the term in question. No one, who believes in a Trinity, thinks there are "three persons and yet one person," according to the arithmetical statement of the committee. We entirely agree with the Report in thinking this to be a "contradiction." We do not even "give our assent to it and think we believe it." We never met with anybody who thought he did, or whose (Trinitarian) neighbors thought he did. God has made us so that we cannot. If we term each member a person, and then term the Trinity a person in the same sense, it will, indeed, be a palpable contradiction, and we are obliged, in one case or the other, to depart, measurably, from the ordinary signification of the word. Nor, it is thought, will the authors of this Report find any one Trinitarian writer that has made a statement of his belief in the language by which they vainly seek to describe and confute the views of the Catholic church. If the explanation given of person in the Report, that it implies one consciousness, will, understanding, be applicable to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost respectively, then this same explanation cannot be affixed, and it never has been affixed to them all in the unity of the Godhead. It is a trick unworthy of the

usual fairness of the argument under review—first to put an erroneous construction upon the statements of an opponent, and then to proceed to overthrow them as if they were his and not yours. “What is plainer in Church history,” asks one of the most learned men that this country has produced, “than that the word *person* was introduced into the creeds of ancient times merely as a term which would express the disagreement of Christians in general, with the reputed errors of the Sabellians and others of similar sentiment, who denied the existence of any *real distinction* in the Godhead, and asserted that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were merely *attributes* of God, or the names of different ways in which he revealed himself to mankind, or of different relations which he bore to them, and in which he acted? The Nicene fathers meant to deny the correctness of this statement when they used the word *person*, by implying that there was some *real* not merely *nominal* distinction in the Godhead; and that something more than a diversity of relation or action in respect to us, was intended.” *

We must not be understood as denying that the Deity has personality. We only deny that it has

* Moses Stuart, of Andover, whose profound and scholarly treatise on the Trinity, presents the strongest Scriptural argument possible in its defense.

been or can be predicated of the Trinity in the same sense that it can be of each member thereof. If, in its ordinary application, it be applicable to the whole, then it is not so to the constituent.

Distinct personality is attributed to the three, with unity of nature. Probably no writer has gone so far as to attribute to Father, Son, and Spirit a unity of consciousness, though, if we may apply the nomenclature of human understanding at all, to a subject so utterly beyond the scope of our faculties, a unity of will and comprehension seems essential even to our wholly inadequate conception of the most perfect Being. For, that which possesses the knowledge of all truth, or, in other words, the infinite understanding must be a unit, even if we could suppose it an attribute of a dozen different beings, for its subject is precisely the same illimitable and unitive truth. And so, of course, the judgment of the most perfect being could be but one, if it were possible there could be a dozen such beings, for the judgment would be based upon a perfect understanding of the same truths with all their antecedents and consequents. The will also must be a unit, for its decisions are determined by the same knowledge and the same infinitely perfect moral attributes.

This is the common argument for the unity of God. But, a unity of consciousness, would seem

to imply an identity, rather than a unity of will and understanding, and this ascription to the three divine persons, will scarcely be found in standard Trinitarian writers. That author, among those we have examined, who approaches nearest to such a statement, is Bishop Sherlock, who, while he ascribes distinct consciousness to each of the three, contends for a mutual interpenetration of consciousness between them, but no one has ever succeeded in stating, affirmatively, what the distinction and what the relation between the sacred Three is.

If the doctrine be, as we contend, clearly revealed in Scripture, it is no argument against it, but rather what we might expect, that we should be unable to define it. It is worse than useless, therefore, to refine farther upon a subject in whose mysterious depths the wisest finite intellect must soon exhaust its soundings.

“No man understandeth the things of God but the Spirit of God.” This subject of personality will again come up, as the Report resorts to a similar argument in discussing the person of Christ. Meanwhile, we content ourselves with the distinct declaration that the committee misunderstands and misstates the Trinitarian doctrine.

It is the easiest thing in the world, first to state an absurdity and then call it one, and this the committee have certainly, though unintentionally

done, doubtless, to the gratification of numerous admirers, and not a little, perhaps, to the perplexity of some sincere seekers after truth. Even the term *ομοουσιον*, adopted after so much dispute by the Catholic church, is sufficient to show that the doctrine is not such as is attributed to the church and her creeds by the authors of this Report. This word merely denominates Christ of the same nature, or, as it is translated, "of one substance" with the Father, not the same "person." In the language of one of the defenders of this faith, "The consubstantiality of the threepersons is the unity of the Godhead." So far from these three being one in the sense of the Report, a kind of pre-eminence is given to the Father, both by ancient and modern writers. "In general," says Bishop Pearson, Exposition of the Creed, London edition, p. 47, etc., "We may safely observe that, in the very name of Father, there is something of eminence which is not in that of Son; and some kind of priority we must ascribe unto him whom we call the first, in respect of him whom we term the second person; and as we cannot but ascribe it, so must we endeavor to preserve it.

"Now that the privilege or priority consisteth not in this, that the essence or attributes of the one are greater than the essence or attributes of the other, (for we shall hereafter demonstrate them to be the

same in both) but only in this, that the Father hath that essence of himself, the Son by communication from the Father. From whence he acknowledgeth that he is from him, John vii, 29; that he liveth by him, John vi, 57; that the Father gave him to have life in himself, John v, 26; and generally referreth all things to him, as received from him. Wherefore, in this sense, some of the ancients have not stuck to interpret those words, the Father is greater than I, John xiv, 28; of Christ as the Son of God, as the second person in the blessed Trinity; but still with reference not unto his essence, but his generation, by which he is understood to have his being from the Father, who only hath it of himself, and is the original of all power and essence in the Son.

We must not, therefore, so far endeavor to involve ourselves in the darkness of this mystery, as to deny that glory, which is clearly due unto the Father; whose pre-eminence undeniably consisteth in this, that he is God not of any other, but of himself, and there is no other person who is God, but is God of him. It is no diminution to the Son, to say he is from another, for his very name imports as much; but it were a diminution to the Father to speak so of him; and there must be some pre-eminence, where is the place for derogation. What the Father is he is from none; what the Son is, he is from him; what the first is, he giveth; what the

second is, he receiveth. The first is a Father indeed by reason of his Son, but he is not God by reason of him; whereas the Son is not so only in regard of the Father, but also God by reason of the same.

“Upon this pre-eminence, (as I conceive) may safely be grounded the congruity of the divine mission. We often read that Christ was sent, from whence he bears the name of an Apostle, Hebrew iii, 1; himself, as well as those whom he therefore named so, because, as the Father sent him, so sent he them, John xx, 21. The Holy Ghost is also said to be sent, sometimes by the Father, and sometimes by the Son; but we never read that the Father was sent at all, there being an authority in that name which seems inconsistent with this mission. In the parable, a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, first sent his servants to the husbandmen, and again other servants, but last of all he sent unto them his Son: Matt. xxi, 23, it had been inconsistent even with the literal sense of an historical parable, as not at all consonant to the rational customs of men, to have said, that last of all the Son sent his Father to them. So God, placing man in the vineyard of his Church, first sent his servants the prophets, by whom he spoke at sundry times, and in divers manners, but in the last days he sent his Son, Hebrews i, 1, 2; and it

were as incongruous and inconsistent with the divine generation, that the Son should send the Father into the world:

“As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, John vi, 57; saith our Saviour, intimating that by whom he lived, by him he was sent, and therefore sent by him, because he lived by him, laying his generation as the proper ground of his mission. Thus he which begetteth, sendeth, and he which is begotten, is sent. For I am from him, and he hath sent me, John vii, 29, saith the Son: from whom I received my essence by communication, from him also, received I this commission. As, therefore, it is more worthy to give than to receive, to send than to be sent; so in respect of the sonship, there is some priority in the divine paternity: from whence divers of the ancients read that place of St. John with this addition, the Father (which sent me) is greater than I, John xiv, 28. He then is that God who sent forth his Son, made of a woman, that God who hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba Father, Gal. iv, 4. So that the authority of sending is in the Father: which therefore ought to be acknowledged, because upon this mission is founded the highest testimony of his love to man; for herein is love (saith St. John,) not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propi-

tiation for our sins. Again, the dignity of the Father will farther yet appear from the order of the persons in the blessed Trinity, of which he is undoubtedly the first. For although in some passages of the apostolical discourses, the Son may first be named (as in that of St. Paul,) the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all; 2 Cor. xiii, 14, the latter part of which is nothing but an addition unto his constant benediction; and in others the Holy Ghost precedes the Son: as now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operation, but it is the same God which worketh all in all: 1 Cor. xii, 4, 6, yet where the three persons are barely enumerated, and delivered unto us as the rule of faith, there that order is observed which is proper unto them; witness the form of baptism, In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: which order hath been perpetuated in all confessions of faith, and is forever inviolably to be observed. For that which is not instituted or invented by the will or design of man, but founded in the nature of things themselves, is not to be altered at the pleasure of man. Now this priority doth properly and naturally result from the

divine paternity; so that the Son must necessarily be second unto the Father, from whom he receiveth his origination, and the Holy Ghost unto the Son. Neither can we be thought to want a sufficient foundation for this priority of the first person of the Trinity, if we look upon the numerous testimonies of the ancient doctors of the Church, who have not stuck to call the Father the origin, the cause, the author, the root, the fountain, and the head of the Son, or the whole Divinity.

“For by these titles it appeareth clearly: *First*, That they make a considerable difference between the person of the Father, of whom are all things, and the person of the Son, by whom are all things. *Secondly*, That the difference consisteth properly in this: that as the branch is from the root, and the river from the fountain, and by their origination from them receive that being which they have; whereas the root receiveth nothing from the branch, or fountain from the river; so the Son is from the Father, receiving his subsistence by generation from him; the Father is not from the Son, as being what he is from none.”

In this long quotation (inserted for the benefit of those of the laity who may not have access to the book,) is a statement of the doctrine as held by the ancient church, backed by citations from such writers as Athanasius, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen,

Epiphanius, Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, etc., who certainly ought to have known what themselves believed and taught.

Nor is this view of the subject confined to ancient writers. The most prominent defenders of the doctrine of the Trinity in modern times also have stated and advocated it as their own. Says Bishop Horsley, whose management of this question in point of learning and conclusiveness of reasoning stands second to none, not even to Pearson:

“If from such expressions (as ‘my Father is greater than I’) you would be content to infer that the Almighty Father is indeed the fountain and center of divinity; and that the equality of the Godhead is to be understood with some mysterious subordination of the Son to the Father, you would have the concurrence of the ancient fathers, and of many advocates of the true faith in all ages.”—*Horsley’s Letters to Dr. Priestly, Letter XV.*

“Bishop Bull in his defense of the Nicene faith spends a whole chapter, and a very long chapter it is, upon the subject of the Son’s subordination; which he maintains to be as much a branch of the true faith as the doctrine of the Son’s eternity or consubstantiality.”—*Ibid.*

“The same thing is asserted by Bishop Pearson in his exposition of the Apostle’s creed” (already quoted at length.) — *Ibid.*

“To the same purpose the learned Mr. William Stephens, author of some able discourses on the Trinity, in his sermon ‘on the eternal generation of the Son of God,’ preached before the university of Oxford, August 5, 1722 affirms; that, ‘on the communication of the Godhead from the Father to the Son, is founded and established all that subordination which we assert among the persons of the Trinity’—he adds, that ‘unless some subordination be maintained, we run into tritheism.’ For he agrees with you (Priestly) and me (Horsley) that ‘three *co-ordinate* persons, would be manifestly three gods.’”—*Ibid.*

“The same sentiments are acknowledged by Dr. Waterland, in his commentary on the Athenasian creed; ‘where it is said *none is afore or after other*, we are not to understand it of order; for the Father is first, the Son second, the Holy Ghost third in order. Neither are we to understand it of office, for the Father is supreme in office, while the Son and Holy Ghost condescend to inferior offices: but we are to understand it as the creed itself explains it of duration and dignity.’”—*Ibid.*

Now it must be observed that these citations are not introduced to prove the doctrine, for that must be proved, if at all, from Scripture alone; but only to show that the doctrine attributed to the Church by the Report is not such as has ever been

held, for it is quite superfluous to point out the total incompatibility of this belief of pre-eminence in the originality, order and office of God the Father, with that belief in the personality of the Deity attributed to Trinitarian writers by this Committee. If God the Father have a pre-eminence in that his nature is underived, in that he is the Father, in that he sends the Son, etc., then we need not delay a moment to show that, according to Trinitarian writers, he cannot be the same *person*, in the ordinary sense of the term, with the Son. The charges, therefore, of "contradiction" and "absurdity," that we may "think we believe it, but cannot" do not lie against that view of the Trinity embraced and ever held fast by the Catholic Church, but only against the statement of the doctrine made by its adversaries themselves. And these quotations equally meet the difficulty propounded on page sixteen of the Report, that "every one who reads the Scriptures must acknowledge that there is a superiority given to the Father," the instances adduced of such superiority being that "there is a Son sent, and a Spirit given," the very instances upon which Trinitarian writers base the Father's pre-eminence. This then cannot be quite "an end to the proposition of the creeds," since they imply and require this very kind of "subordination" on the part of the Son.

But the Committee think the doctrine, if true, would have been taught by Jesus himself, and the Evangelists, and by the Apostles in their preaching. Now let us grant, for a moment, for the sake of argument, that it was not so taught, and see whether the *ergo* of the Committee be indeed inevitable. It is obvious that the communications of our Lord and his first disciples were aimed mainly either at the corruptions of Judaism, as in the sermon on the Mount, or to supply what was wanting in that system. They were Jews teaching the Jews, sent first to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and even after the death of our Lord were under the necessity of tarrying at Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high. So exclusive had been their instructions up to this period, that it was made a charge against Peter in the Acts that he associated with uncircumcised men. Had the Gospel been preached at the outset to the Gentiles, this doctrine might have been at once and broadly stated, but it had been necessary in the time of Moses, thoroughly to indoctrinate the Jews in the unity of God to preserve them from the polytheism and idolatry in which the rest of the world was submerged.

Hence the revelation of a Trinity in unity was but "obscurely intimated" in the Old Testament, and for our Saviour and his disciples to commence

their labors by preaching it broadly to the Jews, would humanly speaking, have been fatal to their mission.

Hence a degree of prudent *reserve* (to use a word that has been much abused) might properly have been exercised in the first enunciation of this doctrine. Nor need we be surprised nor offended by such a suggestion. The very same reserve was practised upon other subjects about which the parties here at variance are agreed. Thus the fact that Jesus was the long expected Messiah, the nature of the kingdom he meant to establish, and that in its comprehension it should embrace all mankind — Gentiles as well as Jews — these undisputed truths were sparingly imparted by Jesus and the first teachers of Christianity, until the evidence of miracles could be brought to bear upon the minds of the Jewish people, and the resurrection of their Lord from the dead should confirm the wavering and timorous spirit of the disciples. Even the metaphorical revelation of the atonement contained in the sixth chapter of St. John, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," gave such offense to the disciples that many forsook him and walked no more with him. And if such were the effect upon the immediate followers of our Lord, it is hazarding little to say that the full exhibition of

the atonement or the Trinity to unbelieving Jews would so have prejudiced their minds that the truth would make but little progress among them.

Such a course would have nipped in the bud the tree of life. It could not subsequently have sent down its roots into the earth nor shot up its boughs towards heaven. The dew could not have lain all night upon its branch, nor would its leaves have been for the healing of the nations. It seems to have been the design of our Lord rather to manifest the Deity, at the outset of his career than to assert it. "The works that I do bear witness of me." The calm and steady exhibition by miracles of supernatural power, as inherent in himself, while it afforded the most satisfactory proof of his Deity, gradually removed from the minds of those who witnessed them the prejudices with which bold assertions in the initiative would certainly have had to contend.

If, therefore, no texts could be adduced from the Gospels in favor of a Trinity, this would be no very conclusive argument against its reception. But we are by no means prepared to acknowledge that either the Evangelists of the four Gospels, or the preachers of the Acts were silent upon this subject.

It was revealed to Joseph that the unborn child of Mary was "conceived of the Holy Ghost," and

St. Matthew recording the story of the birth of Jesus, applies the prophecy of Isaiah, "they shall call his name Immanuel, which is being interpreted, God with us."

In the 12th chapter of the same Gospel, our Lord asserts his superiority over the temple, and his authority over the Sabbath day; "In this place is one greater than the temple," which may be paraphrased thus: The priests in the temple where God dwelt, transgress the law of the Sabbath by not remitting their professional labors. But they act in obedience to a specific command, justified by the holiness of the temple — to which, in the estimation of a Jew, none but God was superior — and the work which it sanctified. But here is one greater than the temple, who by virtue of his own inherent authority, dispenses or qualifies the divine command at his pleasure, for as he is greater than the temple, so is he "Lord also of the Sabbath day." In the fifth chapter of St. John, this authority is still more clearly asserted, so that the Jews themselves understood the inference from it, and when they sought to kill him "because he made himself equal with God," (the very thing which an apostle subsequently tells us "he thought it not robbery to do,") so far from denying the imputation, he accepted it as the true statement of his unity with the Father, "my Father worketh hither-

to and I work : ” as if he had said, as my Father worketh every Sabbath day in sustaining the universe, so I work on the Sabbath day. If Christ had been a mere creature, then were the Jews right in taking exception to this reply, for it could only have added to his guilt in transgressing their law of the Sabbath. It could have been no justification to a creature that God uniformly worked on the Sabbath day, but rather the opposite.

“The Son can do nothing of himself,” i. e. separate from the Father to whom he is indissolubly united, “but what things soever the Father doeth, them also doeth the Son likewise.” The prerogative of forgiving sins, was also assumed by our Lord, and the Jews reasoned justly when they objected, “who can forgive sins save God only ?” an objection that our Saviour was quite willing to meet, in order that the inference should remain where the direct assertion of his Deity might have proved fatal.

The testimony of Nathaniel, when the light of omniscience flashed upon him at his first interview with Jesus, “Thou art the Son of God ;” of Peter when as to Moses at the bush, omnipotence manifested itself to him : “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O, Lord !” of Thomas, yielding to the proof that before him was the conqueror of death and of hell, “My Lord and my God ;” and of the

disciples who witnessed his ascension when they "*worshipped* him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy ;" all these and many more furnish us with satisfactory proof that where occasion warranted, this doctrine was proclaimed by our Lord and his Apostles. The commission to "baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost" becomes to our ears absurd or blasphemous upon any other scheme than that of a Trinity. Interpreted by the Report before us, it will have the meaning, ludicrous if it were not upon so sacred a theme — *Baptizing them in the name of God, of a Creature, and of an influence.* And such an association, I venture to say, the author of our holy religion never contemplated. As to the teachings of the Apostles in our Saviour's lifetime, we have very little information.

They were commissioned to preach (probably after the manner of the sermon on the Mount) and to work miracles, but while there were utterances to record of him who spake as never man spake, the Evangelists did not exert themselves to note down the sayings of his disciples. The king was there, and less attention was paid to the message of his ambassadors. It is fair, however, to suppose, that the disciples, (John, for example, so far as he was informed,) taught the same doctrine at one time that they did at another. What

then, is it likely that man was in the habit of preaching wherever he could safely do so, who afterwards wrote for the instruction of all ages, that "*the word was God*," and who, at the same time that he gives the title, applies also the attributes, eternity and creation, to the word?

An apostle who called Jesus, God, and in the same breath said that he was in the beginning with God, and that he created the universe, probably knew who it was upon whose bosom he had leaned so fondly, and no doubt talked more about this mighty theme than has been handed down to us.

But, we are told that so far as can be gathered from the Acts, Paul and Peter and the other apostles did not preach this doctrine.

This would indeed be a grave charge, if true, for the apostles were now confirmed in their faith — ready for martyrdom — and the light began during the transactions of this book to enlighten the earth, and before its close, the "sound had gone out into all lands, and the words into the ends of the world."

As for Paul and Peter, some fragments of whose sermons are contained in this book, it is quite reasonable, as in the case of John, to suppose that they taught what they afterwards wrote in the epistles which have come down to us, and without delaying to examine their addresses now, it will be time to learn their opinions when we come to

inspect their published writings. At present we content ourselves with the remark that during the whole of their ministry they were in the habit of baptizing in the name of the Trinity, and in the Acts, they certainly say as little by way of explanation of this formula upon the Unitarian hypothesis as upon the opposite. The silence of the Acts, allowing it to exist, is quite as strong an argument against the Committee as against the Orthodox faith, for certainly it would require the crucible and blow-pipe of Dr. Priestly to convert any of the fragmentary discourses which the Acts contain into assertions of the mere super-angelic nature of Christ. The very first address therein *reported*, Peter's on the day of Pentecost, is absolutely fatal to this whole figment, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth *a man*," for as will appear, this Report as much denies the manhood as it does the deity of Christ. There is but little room for doubt, as Horsley and others assert, that Stephen suffered martyrdom for the confession of a Trinity, or for that which necessarily implies it so far as this argument is concerned, the Deity of Christ. One charge upon which Stephen was stoned was "blasphemy against God," and his blasphemy consisted in this, that "he looked steadfastly up into heaven and saw the glory of God," or the *Shekinah*, for that is what the Jews under-

stood by the glory of God made visible, and he said, "Behold I see heaven open, and the son of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord." The Jews understood this to be, on Stephen's part, an assertion of the Deity of Christ, "and they stoned Stephen"—the usual punishment for blasphemy—"calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit—Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." The word "*God*," it will be observed, is supplied by the translators, and the text is literally, "They stoned Stephen invoking and saying," &c., the same word that is used Rom. x, 13th, "Whosoever shall call upon (invoke) the name of the Lord shall be saved." Jesus then was the God whom Stephen "invoked" at the very moment of an inspiration so intense, that "being filled with the Holy Ghost" he looked into the Shekinah itself and saw Jesus after he had "overcome and was set down with his Father upon his throne." The eye of faith was illuminated at the entrance of the dark valley, as men see the stars of heaven at mid-day from the bottom of a well.

The same "glory of God," the Shekinah, burst in all its splendors upon Paul on his way to Damascus, and here again its inhabitant was Christ dwelling in light unapproachable, and worshiped by Paul as he had been by Stephen.

As the remainder of this section of the Report, whose repetitions are various and whose order is far from lucid, will come up for notice farther on in the examination, the reader is requested to suspend his judgment upon it here.

Whilst the authors of this Report are unwilling to admit Christ into the rank of Deity, they strenuously contend for his very great exaltation, and their assertions may be considered a fair specimen of the extent to which error, under the pressure of public opinion from without, and evidence from within, may be carried towards truth without ever reaching the goal. Christ is everything but God. His pre-existence, his divine mission, his procession, his exaltation, are treated in the most flattering terms imaginable. Compliments of every kind are showered upon him. He is "divine," a "creator," "the highest of all derived beings," "next to God in pre-eminence," and "his exaltation as a Divine Person is beyond the imagination of man to conceive."

How orthodox this sounds! How almost unexceptionable! Stripped of verbiage, what does it all mean? Why that Jesus is not God, *neither is he man*, but a being between both. He was not "made like unto his brethren in all things," neither did he "take our nature upon him." That there was nothing human about him but the body.

That he was but a phantom man ! It looks very much as if this Committee had made an effort to come as near as possible to the standard of faith of the Christians around them, and the disposition was highly commendable. One step more, and we could have extended to them the hand of fellowship, and bidden them a cordial welcome to the fold of Christ. They have indeed made a most unsuccessful attempt, but perhaps by the date of the next Conference and Report, we shall have the privilege of recording another "memorable instance of thought, of investigation, and of progress," and we may be permitted to announce that Christ has advanced a step higher in the scale of being, and that he who this year is only "next to God," knew precisely what he was doing when he "thought it not robbery to be equal with God." So exalted a being could hardly have mistaken, and so good a being could not have assumed an untruth. We shall wait with great anxiety, therefore, for the next development of these three gentlemen, who this year turn with scorn from the creeds of men to the Scriptures, for with a progress truly young American, they have advanced so far that perhaps an investigation made in 1855, may lead them through the Scriptures to those very creeds which they have rashly discarded.

The historical argument of this Report is so

meagre, so scattered, and based upon such remarkable assumptions, that we will defer our examination of it until after a review of the logical portion, we shall have leisure to look back and investigate the whole together. As a specimen of the unguarded style in which the history of this all-important subject is treated, take the following: "The history of Christianity shows beyond a doubt, that there was no such doctrine in the Church, in the ages immediately succeeding the Apostles." If it should appear, most unfortunately for this assertion, that a Trinity is the teaching of the Bible, we shall be very apt to find it set forth with greater or less distinctness in the writings of the ages immediately succeeding the Apostles.

CHAPTER II.

TWO-FOLD NATURE OF CHRIST.

THE next important revelation of the Report consists in the announcement and attempted proof of a negative proposition, viz., that neither Scripture nor history, nor metaphysics warrants us in the belief of the two-fold nature of the second Person of the Godhead. The scriptural and historical argument we again defer until we can look back upon the whole of this branch of the subject. After stating from Protestant formularies, the doctrine held by the Church of the two-fold nature of Christ, the Committee proceed to favor us with their objection to it in language so coincident with that of one of their standard authors, that the quotation of the whole may not be deemed inapposite.

Indeed, we may here take occasion to remark, that the originality of this whole Report is no greater than was absolutely necessary to allow for the difference of opinion which every Unitarian holds from every other Unitarian upon a subject

where the only *one* faith has been already appropriated and held by the church Catholic since the Christian Era.

When men leave the anchorage of this rock, they are at the mercy of the winds and waves, and after drifting over unknown and trackless seas, they will land anywhere. But for our quotations :

“The natures (God and man in Christ) are in no manner commixed: for that would make a being who would neither be God nor man; but still they make one person; that is to say, they are united so as to be one, but they are not united! We understand that a person is distinguished by will, mind, consciousness. If there be a nature that has a separate mind, will, motive, consciousness, understanding, it is not the same person with that other which has not this mind, will, consciousness, understanding. But if they are united so as to have one mind, one thought, will, understanding, consciousness, then they are one, identical,—that is what we understand by *person*. Now it is a downright contradiction to say that God’s nature can be united to man’s nature and become one person; and still have separate consciousness. They cannot become one person any more than infinite can be made finite. God is eternal, infinite, omnipotent, omniscient, the Creator of all things, incapable of suffering, perfectly happy.—He holds

the universe in His hands—He is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever; it is but to state an absurdity in the strongest form, to say He was indissolubly united with the nature of man, with imperfect knowledge, weakness, subject to sorrow, to disease and death. But it is not less absurd to say they still retain these opposite qualities, and are one person—not even divided, but one at the death of the cross.” — *Unitarian Views*, pages 29–31.

Now compare this with the following by Dr. Channing, a man whom the members of his denomination may probably be willing to consider a fair exponent of their doctrine for some time to come :

“According to this doctrine, Jesus Christ, instead of being one mind, one conscious intelligent principle whom we can understand, consists of two souls, two minds, the one divine, the other human; the one weak, the other almighty; the one ignorant, the other omniscient. Now we maintain that this is to make Christ two beings. To denominate him one person, one being, and yet to suppose him made up of two minds infinitely different from each other, is to abuse and confound language, and to throw darkness over all our conceptions of intelligent natures. According to the common doctrine, each of these two minds in Christ has its own consciousness, its own will, its own perceptions. They have in fact, no common properties. The

divine mind feels none of the wants and sorrows of the human, and the human is infinitely removed from the perfection and happiness of the divine. Can you conceive of two beings in the universe more distinct? We have always thought that one person was constituted and distinguished by one consciousness. The doctrine that one and the same person should have two consciousnesses, two wills, two souls infinitely different from each other, this we think an enormous tax upon human credulity.”—*Sermon at the ordination of Rev. Jared Sparks, May 5, 1819. By William Ellery Channing.*

The correspondence between the statement of the Committee, and that from the graceful pen of Dr. Channing, as contained in these two extracts is, to say the least, very considerable; and the Committee are certainly entitled to our congratulations, in having so well kept and burnished an armory from which to draw their weapons. As this objection to the orthodox view is stated with so much prominence and confidence, that it may shake the faith of some who lack either the leisure or the ability to cope single-handed with such arguments, it will be necessary to be more elaborate in our examination of this than of most of the “Unitarian Views”-set forth in this Report.

“We have always thought,” says Dr. Channing, “that one person was distinguished by one con-

sciousness." "But," echoes the Report, "if they are united so as to have one mind, one thought, will, understanding, consciousness, then they are one, identical—this is what we understand by *person*."

Perhaps, however, the terms used to express our apprehension of the divine nature may not be used in precisely the same sense in which we apply them to human nature. Our ideas themselves of God, his nature and attributes, are only approximations, and when we apply terms descriptive of man to the Deity, the most that we can mean is that those words express our discovery in God of something like what we understand by them as applied to man. It may be a near or remote resemblance that exists between any divine and human quality which go under the same name, but no one pretends that human language contains terms accurately descriptive of the former and latter both. If we speak of the divine and human wisdom, calling each from poverty both of language and conception by the same name, we mean two things different not only in degree, but in kind. The wisdom of God is intuitive—that of man is acquired. Man reasons—God does not. Man believes—God knows. Man deliberates—God wills. We use the term *person* as applied to either of the Trinity without pretending accurately to

define or understand it, but just so the Unitarians use other terms in a sense varying quite as much from that of their human application. We all understand what is meant by the words father and son, as applied to man. They imply always a literal generation, derivation of the child from the parent, *a mother*, and entire equality and sameness of nature. Now the Committee acknowledges these terms to be applied in the Bible to God and to Christ, and that with reference to the superhuman origin of the latter. Do they mean by them all that they mean when speaking of men? Was Christ literally the Son of the Father? Had he, considered as a "divine person" (*vide* Unit. Views,) a mother? Has he entire equality and sameness of nature with the Father? If not, do they use these terms in the same sense as when they apply them to men? Is not their whole scheme based upon the rejection of that sense, and if they were to insist upon that as they do upon the definition of person as applied to God, would not their whole theology vanish in thin air?

These, it may be remarked, are Scriptural terms, used with great uniformity by the sacred writers, expressive of derivation and equality in nature, and make the relationship only the more complete, because, as Bishop Pearson remarks, the Father begot Christ from all eternity, *alone*. But all that

we ask now is the privilege, that perhaps this *argumentum ad hominem* may make the Committee less reluctant to grant us, of using the word person without understanding by it precisely what we mean by it when speaking of a man.

The theory of the Report seems to be that the first of created beings, some exalted Acon, as the Platonists would have termed him, named Christ, and known as the Son of God, took upon him a human body, for which his own intellect, or spirit, or nature, whatever it was, served the purpose of a soul. Now we are taught by St. Luke, that "Jesus increased ($\pi\acute{\nu}\sigma\epsilon\kappa\omicron\pi\tau\epsilon$) in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Luke i, 52, vide also Luke i, 30, comp. with ii, 40. The word $\pi\acute{\nu}\sigma\omicron\kappa\omicron\pi\tau\omega$ means literally to forward by hammering or striking — hence commonly, to proceed, to go forward, to advance. It does not mean to unfold or exhibit gradually something already completed but hidden, as it must here mean if the immaterial part of it were an angel and not a human soul. It would be a most singular phenomenon if the faculties of an exalted angel could be condensed into those of a child so as to be adapted to a child's body.

It would be necessary also upon the Arian theory to prove that the same word, not even repeated, means when applied to the mind of our Lord, a

gradual manifestation, and when applied to the body, a real growth, for he “increased *in wisdom and stature.*” We may also infer that the body of Christ was animated by a human soul, from the terms applied to his spiritual nature in the Bible. We find the word $\psi\chi\eta$, and in one or two instances $\pi\nu\epsilon\nu\mu\alpha$ applied to the immaterial nature of Christ. These words both signified breath from their original derivation, and are often used interchangeably in the Old Testament. But as the comprehension of spirit grew more enlarged and accurate, greater definiteness in the use of the terms descriptive of it gradually prevailed. In the New Testament we find $\psi\chi\eta$ generally applied to the rational human soul, and $\pi\nu\epsilon\nu\mu\alpha$ to spiritual beings. $\pi\nu\epsilon\nu\mu\alpha$ is indeed sometimes applied to the spiritual portion of man, as in Stephen’s prayer, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit, ($\pi\nu\epsilon\nu\mu\alpha$)” an imitation of our Lord’s own prayer, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit ($\pi\nu\epsilon\nu\mu\alpha$),” but $\psi\chi\eta$ is never applied to an angel. The same usage prevails in English; we speak of “departed spirits,” the “spirits of just men made perfect;” but we never speak of Gabriel as a soul. And in some places where $\psi\chi\eta$ is used, it would be obviously improper to substitute the other, as when the Bible speaks of “redeeming their souls,” or in that most important text, “what shall it profit a man if he shall

gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall he give in exchange for his soul, $\psi\chi\eta$."

Now both these words are applied in the New Testament to Christ. If our Lord commended his "Spirit" to the hands of God, so did Stephen. If Jesus was troubled in spirit "when he testified that one of his disciples should betray him, so Paul was "pressed in spirit," Acts xviii, 5; and "his spirit was stirred within him," xvii, 16. But Jesus also says of himself, "now is my soul $\psi\chi\eta$ troubled;" and again, "my soul $\psi\chi\eta$ is exceeding sorrowful."

And still more worthy of notice is this phraseology in that remarkable prophecy of Daniel quoted by Peter, Acts i, 27: "Thou wilt not leave my soul $\psi\chi\eta$ in hell," *i. e.*, thou wilt not leave my spiritual portion in the place of the souls of the dead. Now if Christ had not possessed a human soul, the application of this term to him would be inexplicable.

Indeed, it is difficult to conceive a more hopeless undertaking than that to prove that Jesus was not a man, and if he were really and truly a man, the Socinian scheme as set forth in the volume before us is utterly annihilated.

But we have still another remark to make upon this position of the Report. Let us recur again, to the language used: "God is eternal, infinite, &c.

and it is but to state an absurdity in the strongest form, to say he was indissolubly united with the nature of man," &c. Now the word "indissolubly" here may fairly be regarded as expletive. If God and man could be united at all, they could be united "indissolubly." We will therefore omit the term and consider without it this "absurdity stated in the strongest form." Is it not obvious that in saying it is absurd to declare that God and man are united is to strike at the root of the whole theory of inspiration, held by the Unitarians as well as by ourselves? We must not be understood to assert that Christ was a *mere* inspired man, (though that would be equally with the orthodox doctrine that Christ was also the eternal God, inconsistent with the doctrine of the Report,) but the cases are quite sufficiently analogous to afford us a confutation of this objection. Isaiah was finite, and God was infinite, yet in the composition of the sublime prophecy that goes under the name of the man, the ignorance of the one was enlightened by the omniscience of the other, the faith of the man was elevated by the wisdom of the God, to declare as from his own knowledge the future of the nations and the Church; "what was dark in him" was "illumined;" "what was low" was "raised and supported;" what was doubting was confirmed; what truth was clouded by its transmission through a human soul, was

purified. Now whether the prophet was conscious at the time or not of the divine inspiration, this is equally fatal to "Unitarian Views." He was certainly one person, that will probably be acknowledged by all, and the prophecy was certainly his, though divinely inspired. It was impossible to distinguish between the divine and human action. The prophecy was unerring truth, such as God only could reveal, but it retained all the native language, the peculiarity of the style, and the idiosyncrasy of the man. If there were but one consciousness, which is probable, then God and man—infinite wisdom and ignorance—were united in one person, with one consciousness. If there were two "consciousnesses," then these two were still united in one person. If the two become identically the same person, then is a mixed nature, (though not that one contemplated by the creeds) equally fatal to the impossibility of their union. But take another case still stronger :

"Unitarians believe in the Holy Spirit as imbuing our souls with good, testifying to our hearts of the Lord Jesus, saving us from our sins, and turning us to God our Father." — *Unitarian Views*, p. 52.

Here then, in the sanctification of every man, upon the showing of this Report itself, is a divine inspiration, both moral and mental, both sanctifying and illuminating, for our salvation. There is here

but one consciousness, for we certainly cannot distinguish between the emotions or suggestions excited by the spirit, and those of unaided human nature, yet in strictness of speech the exercises of regenerate minds are partly human and partly divine, arising from the uniting of infinite wisdom and holiness with ignorance and depravity. All become the acts of one person, whether the Holy Ghost or the man originate them, whether they be the offspring of the temple, or of the God. Prayer for spiritual blessings is unmeaning without this supposition. Now for all purposes necessary to this argument, the connection between the human and divine natures of Christ was that of inspiration. Indeed we have Scripture warrant for this assertion.*

The holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and Christians act now, so far as they copy their master's example, under the same blessed influence, but the extent of power exerted over the prophet, the psalmist and the saint, is definite and limited.

It is bestowed in need and apportioned to faith. Not so in the inspiration of Christ. Isaiah had

* The same remarks might be applied to the agency of the devil in leading bad men into sin, but as Unitarians probably reject the doctrine of a hell for the wicked, we suppose they have no confidence in the devil, and we wish to argue this point upon common ground.

long ago prophesied, "I will put my Spirit upon him," and accordingly he was miraculously "conceived," absolutely "sanctified," ("sanctified and sent into the world,") and "led up into the wilderness by the Spirit." The Spirit descended upon him as a dove out of heaven at his baptism, and "abode upon him." He "baptized with the Holy Ghost," and by "breathing upon" his disciples, communicated the same power to them, imparting to them of the fullness with which he himself was endowed. In a word "*the Spirit was given without measure unto him.*" "He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened (restored to life) by the Spirit, by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." After his resurrection, "he through the Holy Ghost gave commandment unto his Apostles whom he had chosen."

Let us pause a moment and examine this testimony. The "Report" before us acknowledges in explicit and strong terms the pre-existence of Christ :

"As to his existence before he appeared among men, it seems to us that the sacred writings do show this fact: The whole tenor of Scripture places the Lord Jesus Christ altogether above an inspired man. It seems plain to us any reader will acknowledge, that in the body of the New Testament Christ is present as no prophet, no

angel — no being but one next to God is held forth to men.” — *Unitarian Views*, p. 22.

Now, not to delay ourselves with the inquiry what was the need of all this spiritual influence from the Holy Ghost, to enable a “being next to God” to perform the very simple office, (that of a teacher and a martyr,) which upon the Unitarian hypothesis devolved upon Christ, we ask if there be any greater difficulty in understanding Christ’s plenary inspiration by the Holy Ghost, than in understanding the limited inspiration of Isaiah or of Paul? Yet here was precisely the kind of union to which so great exception is taken in the Report:

“God the eternal, infinite, omnipotent, omniscient, the Creator, impassable — is indissolubly united to — (some being, man or angel) — with imperfect knowledge, weakness, subject to sorrow, to disease and death!”

We are not called upon to explain how it is that *the connection between the divine and human natures of Christ was through the Spirit*, how he was conceived and sanctified, how he taught and preached, and was raised from the dead by the Holy Ghost. These are simply assertions of Scripture. With the *quomodo*, we have nothing to do. His distinct personality, his pre-existence, and his exaltation (except in degree) are not at issue in the present

discussion, and the other difficulty, that is, the necessity of Christ's having any other nature than this inspired humanity, is much more mysterious on the Unitarian than the orthodox hypothesis. Over and above all this inspiration of the Holy Ghost, we cannot possibly explain the office and necessity of the pre-existent and exalted Christ, except it was to render efficient the mighty sacrifice demanded for our sins. All that we are concerned with is, the "absurdity in its strongest form" of the union, (with one consciousness, or more than one,) in one person, of God, and this being of imperfect knowledge, of weakness and of passiveness. If the Holy Ghost could be so united to Jesus as to make him the first of inspired teachers, could not *God* the Son be united to the inferior nature of Christ? Is not inspiration always a proof of the possibility of the incarnation, and does it not remove effectually this objection of the Committee?

But, perhaps, we have dwelt longer upon this branch of our review than the case required. We might have dismissed it with the remark that it is a subject upon which no man is wise enough to dogmatize.

The term person in the orthodox creed we have already acknowledged is not used in precisely its ordinary acceptation. The science of mental philosophy is still in its swaddling clothes, and when

it shall have grown to maturity, the question to it and to man will be as appropriate as it is now, "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou know the Almighty unto perfection?" Our province is to listen to the teachings of Scripture with both ears open, to explain them if we can; to believe them if we cannot. Nor does the doctrine of the two-fold nature of Christ "implicate the explicit sincerity of our Lord." The statement of Christ recorded, John v, 30: "I can of mine own self do nothing," is quite as easily explained by one hypothesis as by the other. It is a repetition of what is said in the 19th verse of the same chapter, and is simply a declaration of our Lord's oneness with the Father. "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, verily, verily I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, them also doeth the Son likewise."

The unity of the Godhead could hardly be more positively asserted. The Son separately from the Father can do nothing, but whatsoever things the Father doeth, them doeth the Son likewise. It is equally unnecessary for the support of this doctrine to impugn our Lord's sincerity when he said "my Father is greater than I." The words occur, John xiv, 28, in his parting address to his disciples. "Sorrow" had "filled their hearts," because he

spoke of leaving them, and he seeks to encourage them to take comfort under their great prospective bereavement. He promises to send them the Comforter in his stead, he bestows his peace upon them not as the world giveth, and he exhorts them, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me ye would rejoice because I said I go unto the Father, for my Father is greater than I." We have no right to understand anything here more than the context requires. He tells his disciples that they ought to rejoice that he goes to the Father because of the improvement in his own circumstances thereby insured. His Father was greater in condition than himself as mediator, and to rejoin him would be to enter again into that "glory that he had with him before the world was." To inform them that in his abstract nature, God was greater than himself would have been, but a small ground of consolation, and would moreover have been equally gratuitous, whether his disciples believed him a mere man or "next to God." The text, Mark xiii, 32, is justly considered more difficult of explanation: "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." It certainly "declares" in the language of the Report, "that the Son did *not* know what God *must* know."

But make the Son perfect man as well as God, and we find no difficulty greater here than when we are told in the early part of his history that he "increased in wisdom." Surely if he could increase in wisdom, there might be some things that he did not know in his mediational capacity, and it is simply begging the question to assert that he said this "in his whole character."

Unitarianism denies the manhood of Christ precisely as it denies his Godhead. The Bible speaks of him as both God and man, and affirms at one time that which is predicable of the one character, and at another what will apply only to the other. And this is the only hypothesis that *can* reconcile such a text as this with the statement in John i, that "the word was God," *the Creator of the world*. "Unitarian Views" view but one side, or rather neither side, and they are utterly at fault when they attempt to explain two such apparently contradictory passages.

CHAPTER III.

SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENT.

THE scriptural argument for the Deity of our Lord has come up before us so far as to meet the objection that this doctrine was not set forth in the *oral* teachings of Christ and his Apostles, and we might almost leave the settlement of the question with the texts already quoted. But to do so would be to omit some of the strongest proof texts in the Bible, contained in the published *writings* of the Evangelists and Apostles, and of our Lord himself, (in Revelation), which either assert his Godship in direct terms or ascribe to him infinite attributes and divine worship. We shall be brief in our citations of these passages, nor is it our purpose to cite them all, and few we apprehend will read them attentively without the conviction that, upon the Unitarian hypothesis they admit of no satisfactory explanation.

We first adduce that most remarkable text, John i, 1st: "In the beginning was the word,

and the word was with God, and the word was God." The force of this text as an argument does not consist entirely in the appellation God, applied to Christ, but chiefly in what is predicated of the word (revealer or declarer) under the title of God. Still the use of the term is an argument of no slight importance. Wherever the term God is applied to any created being, it is used in such a connection that it is impossible to mistake it for the designation of the Supreme Being. "I have made thee a God to Pharaoh," i. e., I have given thee such power as will exalt you to the character of a divinity in his estimation. But in the passage before us in the very breath in which St. John says the word was God, he ascribes to him as such eternity and creation, two of the attributes of Jehovah! He "was in the beginning with God," that is before any creature existed, and "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made," i. e. the word who was God was the Creator of the universe. If this be not to assert the Deity of Christ it is difficult to conceive in what language such a proposition could be stated. Would the Committee be willing to express their belief with St. John that Christ *was God, the eternal Creator of the universe?* We venture to say, that such a statement in their report to Conference would not have been regarded

as very "profitable" by the body that appointed them. Now let us substantiate each of these ascriptions of divinity, of eternity, and creation to Christ by other texts.

The verse Rom. ix, 5, presents us with another instance in which Christ is called God under precisely similar circumstances, i. e. what is affirmed of him can apply only to Jehovah: "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed forever," or as it should be translated and punctuated, "whose are the fathers, and of whom (according to the flesh) Christ, who is over all God, blessed forever." In vain will other constructions be put upon this verse. The Greek as it stands is confirmed by "all the manuscripts, all the ancient versions, and nearly all the fathers."

The word "all" in the text means the universe, as in the passages, Col. i, 17, Ep. i, 19-23, John iii, 31, 1 Cor. xv, 27, all of which relate to Christ. "God over all" then means "*the supreme God*," and any Greek scholar can see that this is not a doxology, but is a simple affirmation of the deity of Christ.ⁱ

The same may be said of Heb. i, 8: "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom." No other translation of this verse is for a moment admissible, and as before the

argument is not only from the name God being applied to Christ, but that eternity is predicated of his dominion. And if it be matter of wonder that in the next verse we read "God, even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows," it is as Professor Stuart well remarks, "a wonder which no ground but that which Trinitarians take can ever explain — viz. : that the divine and human natures co-existed in Christ, and that in the same sentence he could with propriety speak of himself as human and divine." One other text of a similar nature we will adduce, 1 John v, 20, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." The last clause of this verse refers naturally to its immediate antecedent "Jesus Christ." Then the adjective true is twice before applied to him in the same verse with "him that is true," "in him that is true," "the true God." Finally the predicate "eternal life" is in John's writings constantly applied to Christ, and *never* to the Father. "In him was life — this life was the light of men — giving life to the world — the bread of life — my words are spirit and life — the way, the truth, and the life." And so in the first chapter of this epistle, "Our hands have handled

of the word of life—for the life was manifested, and we have seen it—and then unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us.” And in the 11th, 12th, and 13th verses of the very chapter from which the text is taken upon which we are commenting, “And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life.” Jesus then is here called “the true God and eternal life.”

“One explicit declaration in the words of Jesus (surely then in the words of the beloved disciple) made without metaphor or any figure of speech, must be sufficient to establish any fact of the Gospel.” *Unitarian Views*, page 36.

What is to be said then of the “explicit declaration,” “*This is the true God*”? Athanasius himself could not have been more emphatic. Other passages of like import could be adduced, but it would occupy more room than we have to spare so to present them as to defend them against false constructions, and after all this class of texts forms but a fraction of those which prove the divinity of Christ. Following the order already

indicated, we now proceed to consider other passages in which creation is ascribed to Christ, illustrative of John i, 3. "All things were made by him," &c. We desire to call the reader's attention to Heb. i, 10-12: "And Thou God in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth and the heavens are the works of thy hands," &c.

This is addressed to Christ, as any one can see by examining the context, and it unquestionably attributes to him the creation of the heavens and the earth, as well as (in the latter clause not quoted) eternity and immutability. We are indebted to the Report for another clear and indisputable passage of the same kind that might have escaped our attention, viz., Cor. i, 15-19, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature. For by him were all things created that are in heaven or in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him, and by him all things consist." This text is no doubt quoted by the Committee as favoring their own side of the question, and a more minute examination of it may therefore be necessary. The application of it to a moral creation is too far fetched to admit of argument. The specifications and the *usus loquendi* preclude the possibility of such a supposition, and as it is not

offered by the Committee, we will assume that they have had the good sense to reject it. If therefore the text makes for "Unitarian Views," it must be from the phrase "first born of every creature," or from its attributing the creation of the universe instrumentally and not originally to Christ. But both these objections are untenable. It reads "the first *born*, i. e., begotten of every creature," not the first *created* of every creature. It is the same word translated "first begotten," in Heb. i, 6, and there Christ is represented as the object of angelic worship, and of course divine. And again, when he bringeth the first begotten into the world, he saith, "And let all the angels of God worship him." Then every creature does not mean every *rational* creature, but *all creation*, animate and inanimate, as in Rom. viii, 19—22, where "the creature is used interchangeably with the whole creation." The sentence "first born of every creature," therefore means that *Christ was begotten of the Father before the creation of the world*, and it is precisely parallel with John i, 1—2: "In the beginning was the word—the same was in the beginning with God," thus furnishing a strong additional proof of the eternal filiation of the Son.

But was this creation by him as the instrument? The Greek does not support such an interpretation, and we could as well prove by it that the Father is

an instrumental agent, as that the Son is such. The only text seeming to bear this constitution is Heb. i, 2, and the difficulty here vanishes if we consider the word θεός in the first verse as put for the abstract — *the Deity* — in whose eternal counsels the work of creation was assumed by the second person of the Trinity. To delegate creation to a subordinate being were to delegate to him also eternity, omniscience, and omnipotence, and thus to make him God. Creation would only be delegated to an infinite being.

The text Col. i, 15–17, then furnishes another irrefragable proof that Christ Jesus was the Creator of the universe. If to call him God, and to attribute to him the creation of all things be not to assert his Deity, we are at a loss in what terms to express this doctrine. It is almost a waste of words to show that the sacred writers always speak of creation as the work of Jehovah alone, but take a few passages, for we are fallen upon times in which the most venerable sentiments and institutions may be dissipated with a breath. “These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth, in the day that Jehovah God made the earth, and the heavens,” Gen. i, 4. “For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is,” Ex. xx, 11. “I am Jehovah that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens alone;

that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself." "But Jehovah is the true God, he is the living God, and the everlasting King; at his wrath the earth shall tremble and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation."

"Thus shall ye say unto them: The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens. He (Jehovah) hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion," Jer. x, 11-12.

Here the act of creation is most emphatically appealed to to distinguish Jehovah from all other gods. The doctrine of a Trinity *alone* can reconcile these and many similar passages with those just quoted from the New Testament, in which creation is ascribed to Christ. "Jehovah stretcheth forth the heavens alone, and spreadeth abroad the earth by himself." "All things were made by him (Christ) and without him was not anything made that was made."

If Christ were Jehovah, well. If not Isaiah and John are irreconcilably opposed to each other. Creation is the work of God "alone," and if Christ created the universe then Christ is God. To prove the *Eternity* of Christ, it will be necessary only to add another text to those which have already been given.

In Rev. xxii, 13, we read: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." This text presents itself in three other places in the same book, and in each case its reference to Christ is so obvious as to require no comment. Vide. i, 11, 17, ii, 8. Now in the 6th verse of the 21st chapter the same description is given of the eternity of God. And if we refer to Isaiah we find Jehovah twice expressing his eternity in the same formula; "I am the first and I am the last, and besides me there is no God;" "I am he, (the true God) I am the first and I also am the last." Is. xlix, 6, xliii, 12. Are there two who are first and last? If not, Christ and Jehovah are one.

But still it may be asked, are our relations to the Son of God, as set forth in Scripture, such as to correspond to this exhibition of his character? We answer that he is everywhere revealed, not only as God, but as God to us. Precisely the feelings and duties required from men towards God, are required under the same sanctions towards Christ. Do we owe faith to God? "Ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Are we required to honor God? "That all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." Must we love God? "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema

maranatha." (i. e. accursed.) Must we obey God? "He that hath my (Christ's) commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." Must we worship God? Christ is repeatedly presented as the object of Christian worship. Luke xxiv, 52. "And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy." Acts i, 24. "Thou Lord which knowest the hearts of all *men*, show whether of these two thou hast chosen." Acts vii, 59. "And they stoned Stephen calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit." 1 Cor. xii, 8. "For this cause I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me." Heb. i, 6. "And again when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him."

And finally that magnificent passage, Rev. v, 8, 14: "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors which are the prayers of the Saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld and I heard the voice

of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea and all that are in them, heard I saying: Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb forever and ever. And the four beasts said Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshiped him that liveth forever and ever." These passages and many more are demonstrative as to the fact of Jesus being the proper object of spiritual worship. We may here leave this portion of the argument, for nothing more can be necessary to prove the Deity of Christ. That exceptions, the chief of which we have pointed out, have been taken to some of these proof texts, we are well aware, but none for fifteen hundred years past that have even weakened their force.

If Christ be repeatedly termed God, pronounced eternal and the Creator, and if he be presented to us as the object of our supreme faith, love, obedience and worship, then we may rest quietly

in the assurance that our adoring and honoring him "as we honor the Father," is an act of duty acceptable to the God of the Bible.

We have not attempted to adduce all the proofs existing upon any one point, nor to answer all the objections that have been raised. If Christ were man as well as God, every time that he is spoken of in this capacity, he would of course appear as inferior to the Father; and if to eat, drink, learn, grow, have imperfect knowledge, sleep, weep, suffer and die as a man; if to have a "soul," to be termed "a man of sorrows," "the Son of man," to be "born of a woman," to be "a man approved of God," to be "that man whom he hath ordained," if all these and a thousand more cases in which he is represented as a man, do not prove him such, then Adam was not a man, nor is humanity predicable of any of his descendants.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HOLY GHOST A PERSON.

IN this report we are next furnished with a very obscure and lame attempt to prove that the Holy Ghost is not a person. We do not doubt the sincerity of its authors, and we can only account for the weakness of their effort by supposing them to be strongly under the influence of an impression of which all parties are sensible, that the chief battle-ground in this discussion is around the divinity of Christ. Let that be established, and very few would object to either the divinity or personality of the Holy Spirit, and if the Committee have succeeded, as no doubt, they flatter themselves in overthrowing that, few will be found to contend for a duality in the Godhead, although we are far from admitting that the independent argument for the personality of the Spirit is in any degree inconclusive. In entering upon a brief examination of this subject, we must be permitted to claim what-

ever advantage results from the previous proof of the Deity of Christ. Having proved this, if a Trinity be (which we earnestly contend it is not) a disturbance of the divine unity, the mischief is already wrought, and no one need scruple upon metaphysical grounds to object to the Deity of the Holy Spirit.

If there may be two persons and one God, there may also be three persons and one God, and the question is narrowed down to the simple testimony of Scripture.

The argument that "Unitarian Views" present against the personality of the Holy Ghost may be disposed of in few words.

It is altogether the weakest part of the Report which we have yet examined, and consists of a partial examination of a few proof texts and those not the most conclusive, of instances from the *poetry* of the Bible where the breath, the word, the wisdom of God, and the like are personified with personal pronouns affixed to them, and a not very complimentary allusion to the circumstances under which this doctrine found a place in the creeds. Were it not for the consideration already mentioned, that all parties are (perhaps too much) disposed to regard this article of faith as standing or falling with the divinity of Christ, we might almost be disposed to pause and ask the Com-

mittee, did Channing's burnished armory fail them here? But we mean them no disrespect, and if they seriously offer this argument as the basis of their "views," we will seriously attempt its confutation.

It cannot be expected, however, that we should follow the Report through every passage of Scripture adduced. We freely admit that in some texts the words "Spirit," "Spirit of God," "Spirit of Christ," and the like do not refer to the Third Person of the Trinity, and that other passages which have such reference taken alone, could not prove his personality.

But still there are enough left amply to vindicate the position of this doctrine among the articles of the Christian faith. The belief of Socinians upon this point, or rather of Arians, for the theology of this Report is essentially Arian and not Socinian—is stated on page 43, in these words, "what is said of the Spirit has a plain reference to God himself; or the power of God; or the influence or communication of God." And the Report does not scruple to apply this interpretation to the formula of baptism itself, as has already been noticed so as to make it read, "Baptizing all nations in the name of the Father, an Aeon, or Phantom, and an Influence or Communication!" This jumble (we can think of no other word so applicable, and we trust it does

not savor of irreverence) is not indeed written out, but its constituent parts are furnished in the work under review. It is reasonable to suppose that its authors were unwilling themselves to contemplate the result of their speculations.

On page 45 we read, "No person ever came as a Comforter, 'to dwell' as Jesus had done with the Apostles or others, and openly and personally to testify of him: but it (the Holy Spirit) dwelt with them, nor could a person 'be in them.' If it be said that there are passages which speak of God dwelling in you, and Christ dwelling in you, you dwelling in Christ; very well; but God and Christ have been shown and acknowledged to be persons, and so are you, and the figure of speech is therefore plainly understood." That is, though God and Christ may dwell in us and be persons, the Holy Spirit is proved not to be a person because he is said "to dwell" in us. We have seldom seen an argument, if we may dignify it with that title, stated and refuted by the same author in so brief a compass.

"The expressions 'breath of the Almighty,' and 'breath of the Lord' are used in the Bible just as the expression 'Spirit of God' is used," and what are the illustrations? One of them is found in Job, and the other in a Psalm, the two most highly poetical books in the Bible! And the Com-

mittee seriously urge this as a reason why in an hundred instances in the sober prose of the New Testament, where the Holy Ghost is spoken of as a person and personal acts are attributed to him, all Christendom should participate in their opinion, that our Saviour and his apostles were harmlessly aiming at rhetorical effect, and designed this as an emphatic mode of personifying the divine "influence." The same remark applies to the passage on the 47th page, "Let it not be said that notwithstanding our Lord does speak, as in the verses quoted from John, he uses the pronouns 'he' and 'him,' and they indicate personality conclusively; such personification is very common in the Scriptures, and not uncommon in other writings, especially in oriental writings. The sun rejoiceth and knoweth his going down; the deep lifteth up his hands; wisdom crieth," &c. These are again from the poetical books, and are nothing to the purpose. The argument derived from them amounts to this, that because certain (inspired) poets were accustomed to make use of a very common poetical figure when treating certain subjects, therefore, prose writers who lived a thousand years after them, invariably use the same figure of speech whenever they have occasion to mention another and different subject. It were quite as strong an argument to prove from such expressions in the

“Mask of Comus” as “strong siding champion Conscience,” “pure ey’d Faith,” “white handed Hope,” “unblemished form of Chastity,” that the great author in writing his “Defense of the people of England,” intended by Charles the First to designate the “influence” or “communication” of monarchy. The reader will, we trust, pardon us for occupying his time in the rendition of answers so obvious as those which many of the comments of the Report can alone admit.

We really feel as if our own time could be better employed, while we are glad to learn that the ingenuity and learning of the Committee could devise no better arguments for the “profit” of their brethren. We do not of course apply these remarks to all the arguments of the Report,—and we have sufficiently indicated by the attention we have bestowed upon them our estimation of the skill with which they were forged and wielded. Upon the passage “they were *all filled* with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance,” the remark is made, “Here is no *person* come, and surely it would be very absurd to say they were all filled with a person.” Yet we have already been told that God and Christ may dwell in us, and if so we may be said to be filled with them without any great extension of the absurdity shown by the

Apostles in the use of such language. Indeed, this was the enduement "with *power* from on high," promised to be sent *upon* them in the last chapter of Luke: "And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, till ye be endued with power from on high." The power spoken of here is what is called the Comforter in St. John. This is plain. *Unitarian Views*, page 48.

Not quite so plain without assuming the very point to be proved, viz.: that the Holy Ghost has no distinct personality, and this the reasoning of the Report has not yet established. No doubt this was the fulfillment of the Saviour's promise, and we have just as little doubt that the "power from on high" was the power of the Holy Ghost, with whose divine influence then and there bestowed upon them they were filled. So of the text "he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost," upon which the Report remarks, "We cannot imagine baptism with a person, although it is plain there is here a figure of speech, therefore we think the purifying power or influence of God is meant," and so it is most manifestly — "the purifying power or influence" of God the Holy Ghost.

Several other texts of the same kind are adduced, p. 49, in which the Holy Ghost is said to be "given," to be "received," to "fall upon," to

be "poured out upon," &c., and to all these we make the same answer — if indeed it be "a power or impartation" here spoken of, it is the "power or impartation" of God the Holy Ghost, and not of God the Father.

"As mentioned in the first of Matthew and first of Luke, no man dare say that more was meant than the power of God." Let us see. The texts refer to the miraculous conception of the Virgin Mary, the mother of our Lord — "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee," &c. Is it not sufficiently obvious that the power here spoken of is the power of the Holy Ghost, and may we not justly claim this, and all the other texts above alluded to as additional evidences of his distinct personality?

But we will not weary the attention of our readers by the examination any farther of such unsatisfactory reasoning.

We should feel called upon to express our gratitude to the Committee for this their attempt to prove a negative proposition, viz., that the Holy Ghost has not distinct personality, were we not aware that in so doing they have assumed no greater burden than by the laws of argument is incumbent upon them, for this great doctrine has the consent of Christendom, and even the Committee must acknowledge that the New Testament

appears obviously to teach it, and that no small degree of ingenuity and research are required to make its teachings favor the opposite view. These then are strong presumptive arguments in its favor, such as to throw the entire burden of proof upon the negative, and our gratitude to those who have assumed it resolves itself into simple admiration of the boldness which could venture before the public with such an argument.

We now proceed to introduce a few texts from which the distinct personality of the Holy Ghost *can* be proved, and it will appear that they are by no means the same which the Committee have thought fit to put into our mouths.

Let us first turn our attention to the baptism of our Lord as recorded in the 3d chapter of Matthew's Gospel. "And Jesus when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water, and lo! the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; and lo! a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Can any one believe here with this Committee that the "power, influence or impartation" of God appeared here in bodily shape? This were to realize the personification of the poets with a vengeance. Think of it for a moment. Suppose the *pity* of God should assume bodily

shape, or the holiness of God, or the justice, or the eternity of God were to take the form of a dove and fly down to the earth to astonish the beholder. And yet we are called upon to believe that the power of God has done so!

It would really seem as if the Spirit here mentioned were a person whether divine or not, and a distinct person from the Father and the Son, both of whom were manifest upon the same occasion. "*I ad Jordanem,*" said the fathers, "*et videtis Trinitatem,*" and either we must believe that the Trinity was manifested upon that occasion, or that the whole scene was a trick to impose upon the Jews. The formula of baptism has been already alluded to as requiring, upon the Arian interpretation, to be read: "In the name of Jehovah, of a created being, and of omnipotence," two persons and an attribute! "The Spirit whom (not which) the Father will send in my name." "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost," upon the same hypothesis must be rendered, "the grace of a creature, (here placed before God) the love of Jehovah, and the communion of the divine power!"

While we agree with the Committee that the use of the pronouns "he" and "him" by our Lord in speaking of the Holy Spirit, may not "conclusively indicate personality," yet we regard it as a

powerful argument therefore that whenever the Third Person of the Trinity is mentioned in Scripture, the pronouns applied to him are *invariably* the personal pronouns, and some better reason for this must be given than the flimsy one already noticed, that the poets a thousand years before had used the rhetorical figure, prosopopeia, or we shall be compelled to believe that it would be wholly inconsistent with the plain, matter of fact style of the New Testament, to make such use of language that it requires great discrimination to avoid being led by it into almost fatal delusion. The use of these pronouns once or twice or ten times, might be explained away perhaps, but their invariable use cannot without doing violence to the first principles of language. The same remark may be applied to the constant attributing of personal acts to the Spirit which we find in writers both of the Old and New Testaments. Sometimes we might believe that nothing but variety or animation of style was intended, but the same thing that must have attracted our observation in the Old Testament recurs again and again in the New, whether in Gospels, Acts, Epistles, or Revelation, till from this stringent and cumulative testimony we are compelled to admit that no attribute or influence of God could, among various writers for thousands of years, be thus represented as speaking and

acting what only a person *can* speak and act, provided the writers were themselves honest and intelligent. Still less when we believe them to have been inspired by the Spirit of God.

What can be made of such passages as the following, unless it be that the Saviour designedly spoke in an obscure and ambiguous, no to say unintelligible style, or that he was speaking of a personal agent? "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "Nevertheless it is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you; and when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment." John xiv, 16, 17, 26, and xvi, 7, 8. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you

things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." Is it possible that our Saviour could talk in this way of an influence or impersonal attribute?

Would it be necessary to alter one word of this in order to make it apply to a person, and would any Unitarian originally so speak of "a power, influence, or impartation?"

It will hardly be said that God himself is here spoken of under the name of the Comforter or Paraclete, not only because God sends him, but from the offices assigned to him, as, for example, "he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak." This, implying subordination in office, cannot refer to the Father.

Let us now examine the testimony of 1 Cor. xii, 4-11: "Now there are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit." (*Here the "influence or impartation," the gifts are distinguished from the Spirit,*) "And there are differences of administration but the same Lord, and there are diversities of operations but it is the same God which worketh all in all." (*Here the Spirit, Son and Father are clearly distinguished from each other.*) But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every

man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kind of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

Perhaps the most appropriate comment upon this whole passage will be found in the following extract:

"We understand that a person is distinguished by will, mind, consciousness. If there be a nature that has a separate mind, will, motive, consciousness, understanding, it is not the same person with that other which has not this mind, will, consciousness, understanding." — *Unitarian Views*, page 29.

"To one is given by the same Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another the interpretation of tongues; by the same Spirit." This looks very much as if the donor had "a separate mind, consciousness, understanding." "To another gifts of healings—to another working of miracles—to another divers kind of tongues—by the same Spirit." Surely he did not do this without a "motive."

“But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.” And here is indicated, as most men would be willing to acknowledge, the possession of “a will.” Nor can this argument be retorted upon us again, for we have already disclaimed the use of the term *person* in its ordinary sense when applied to the Trinity.

“But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him? Even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” 1 Cor. ii, 10, 11. Upon this text, the Committee hazard the remark :

“By the spirit of a man, we do not understand his person; so by the Spirit of God, we are not to understand a person.” — *Unitarian Views*, page 47.

Perhaps the Committee have forgotten the old adage — “*nil simile est quatuor pedibus*,” or they would not have required the apostle by one comparison to teach everything that respects the Holy Ghost. We might reply that by the spirit of a man, we do not understand his “power, influence or impartation,” nor the man “himself;” and then the text would be equally fatal to their view, as the necessary inference would be, — so by

the Spirit of God, we are not to understand his power, influence or impartation.

... The Apostle's meaning was simply this, as any one can satisfy himself by reading the context. He is speaking of the need of divine illumination to enable the Apostles to understand and communicate the purposes of the divine benevolence to men. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit," &c. Here then again we have acts attributed to the Spirit that can only belong to a personal, not to say an omniscient agent. The Spirit revealeth, searcheth, knoweth, and teacheth.

... Would it not be in the last degree insipid in St. Paul to assert that the mind of God "Knoweth the deep things of God?"

... We do not for a moment suspect any intention of the kind on the part of the authors of this Report, but really this partakes strongly of the character of solemn trifling upon the most serious and weighty of all subjects. No one would ever have dreamed of the forced and artificial construction put by this report upon many important assertions of Holy Writ were it not for the vain effort of finite minds to bring to their own level the nature and the attributes of infinity. The

plain meaning of these texts, *one that would never have been excepted to if they had occurred in Homer or in Ovid*, is that there is a Holy Ghost, a divine Person, and that there is a real though incomprehensible difference between him and God the Father, and with this plain men will rest satisfied, and humble men will continue to walk by faith until God shall see fit to reveal to us "the deep things of God" by his Spirit. One passage near the conclusion of this section of the Report we cannot forbear quoting at length, for we regard it as an illustration of, "thought, investigation, and progress," every way commendable. "But Unitarians do believe in the Holy Spirit as imbuing our souls with good, testifying to our hearts of the Lord Jesus, saving us from our sins, and turning us to God our Father. The great truth of the presence, power and influence of the Holy Spirit is to us of unutterable importance. It is a truth full of consolation and hope. It lies at the foundation of spiritual religion. Without it religion would become mere formalism, and regeneration — that new birth, that spiritual renewal without which one cannot enter the kingdom of heaven — a meaningless term." *Unitarian Views*, page 52.

While we cordially unite with all our readers in the fervent prayer that God the Holy Ghost may "guide into all truth," those who thus profess to

acknowledge and depend upon his teachings, we must at the same time express our astonishment that the pressure of orthodoxy from without should have extorted such averments from men who deny the personal existence of that blessed Spirit, a Trinity, an atonement, inbred sin, and its awful and eternal consequences. Nor can the Committee shield their faith from the solemn and loud protest of everything that is humbling, purifying, and remedial in the gospel of Jesus Christ by their reprobation of the caricature of the doctrines of Calvinism with which they conclude their argument against the personality of the Third Person of the Trinity. We have yet to meet with a Calvinist in modern times who would render an account of the faith that is in him in the language attributed to his school, viz: that "a certain portion of his (God's) children are elected without any reference to good works." Believers in election and predestination uniformly hold that good works are essential to salvation, and that only the holy will be saved. "Unitarian Views" on the other hand, if we have read them correctly, save all alike, and this too without an atonement. Future retribution, final or finite, is not once hinted at in this Report that was received with so much "profit" by the body of theologians before whom it was read.

The awful pageantry of a judgment day so often

described in the Bible, and the sentence of everlasting torment upon those incapable of reform, many times repeated beforehand by our Lord the Judge himself, all these we suppose are to be set down for rhetorical effect, and God's moral government of his creatures vanishes before the "thought, investigation and progress" of those who are too wise, or not wise enough to take God at his word without an interpretation of the oracle. But with this subject of election we have no disposition to meddle. It does not concern our argument, and quite as many believers in a Trinity have been found ranged on one side as on the other of the vexed question. No one regards either its belief or its negation as essential to salvation, and the Committee are quite welcome to attack or defend it at their pleasure. We can assure them that they will find ground firm and broad enough on either side of the line to support them, and many fellow-travelers to accompany them with shoutings to the bosom of their God.

CHAPTER V.

REVIEW OF HISTORICAL STATEMENTS.

WE have purposely deferred an examination of those portions of "Unitarian Views" which profess to give the early history of the controversy until the present moment. It was necessary, in order to present a connected view of the whole, to depart from the arrangement adopted by the Committee, and to present the biblical view of the natures of Christ and the Holy Ghost. Having done so we now commence an investigation as brief as the occasion will possibly admit, of the very curious historical assertions scattered through the work before us. Before we proceed, however, it may be as well to notice a blunder, (for we had rather believe it to be such than an intentional *suppressio veri*;) that appears on the 28th page of the Report:

"It, (the doctrine of two natures in Christ) originated in a semi-barbarous age; and it was established in its present form at a time when

strife and persecution, bloodshed banishment and death were the agents by which religious opinions were enforced on mankind. (Quere : is to 'enforce on mankind' good English?) The council of Ephesus which had this doctrine under consideration was marked by the beating of a bishop in the Church where it was held, so that he died of his wounds."

Now can it be possible that our learned Committee should not have known at the time they penned this last sentence, that this very council of Ephesus, (the second of that name) so far as it or its proceedings had anything to do with the question before us, in its constitution and results *was decidedly Unitarian*, according to the views announced in this Report! The decision of the council of Nice held a century before, was indeed left untouched as not being concerned in the difference between Eutyches and his opponents. But the doctrine established by that council was that there was only *one nature in Christ*, that of *thow Word who became incarnate*, thus *denying his humanity*, a very important step, it will perhaps be acknowledged, in the direction of "Unitarian Views."

This council, it must be observed, was an occasional one, assembled for other purposes, and it was termed by the Greeks "an assembly of

robbers.” Its decrees were never received by the Catholic (*i. e.*, universal) Church. The bishop (Flavianus) who was scourged, was treated so on account of his adherence to the orthodox belief of two natures and one person in Christ. He was scourged most probably by a band of soldiers and an armed mob, who rushed into the church to second the tyrannical proceedings of the president Dioscorus, and he subsequently died in banishment.

But we had better at once take leave of the consideration of the violence with which the decrees of councils were enacted and enforced. It was characteristic of the age in which these great doctrines were determined to be the doctrines of Scripture. Nor was such unhallowed logic restricted to either party. The prosperity of the church, released from the bonds of persecution, and petted and fostered by emperors, had no doubt developed the pride even of ecclesiastical hearts—good men in the main—so that they were unwilling to tolerate the smallest difference in phraseology from their own favorite formularies. One writer upon this subject does not scruple to inquire as follows, in a letter to Dr. Channing, viz: “Was not Arius, the father of that class of Unitarians to which you yourself seem to belong, a violent persecutor? Was it not he and his followers who *first of all* among professed Christians, set the

hideous and direful example of *secularizing the discipline of the church, and persecuting their opponents to imprisonment, banishment, and death?* And did they not crimson the whole Roman Empire with the blood of Trinitarians? Did not Davides perish in prison under the unrelenting severity of the persecuting spirit of Frustus Socinus and his adherents, the founders of another class of Unitarians?" &c.

But we can very safely leave out all this kind of argumentation. If councils had been a thousand fold more violent and tyrannical than they were, and had decided, for example, that there is a God, their conduct would not make their decision false, nor the opposite true. And precisely the same remark applies to the objection that these councils were convened and influenced by the temporal prince! Their decisions may still have been right or wrong independently of this. We will therefore no longer delay our readers with topics wholly irrelevant, but proceed with the history.

All that it is necessary to examine by the light of history may be summed in the following extracts from the Report:

"The history of Christianity shows beyond doubt that there was no such doctrine (as the Trinity) in the Church in the ages immediately succeeding the Apostles. In the venerable formula called the

Apostles' Creed, the oldest known,—older than the Nicene or the Athanasian—though no one now pretends that it was composed by the Apostles, there is no mention of a Trinity; but the contrary is the plain reading of the instrument. It is decidedly Unitarian.*

“The doctrine of the two natures in Christ—was resorted to to uphold the trinity doctrine of the creeds *begun at the Council of Nice*. It originated in a semi-barbarous age.” p. 27. “It was

* We are at a loss to perceive that “the contrary” to a Trinity is the plain reading of the Apostles' Creed. If this were so, there could be no very good reason for its being retained as the oldest, and perhaps the best human symbol of our faith in all branches of the Catholic Church without exception. If it taught Arianism, it would long since have been discarded as contrary to Scripture. It does not indeed use the word Trinity, nor do the other creeds, neither do they use its opposite, but its articles are expressed mostly in Scriptural language, and it is intended to teach whatever the Bible teaches upon this subject. What that is has been already shown. So far from this Creed being “decidedly Unitarian,” there is at least one article in it decidedly hostile to the form of Unitarianism contained in the “Report.”

We have seen that this “Report” denies that Christ was a man at all, affirming that he only had the *body* of a man, of which his higher nature was the soul. Now the words in the creed “he descended into hell” refer without doubt, “according to the general opinion of the Church of Christ in all ages,” to the *soul* of Christ, and they were so used by the fathers in their contest with Apollinarius who denied to Christ the possession of a rational soul, “*nam Apollinaristi quidem carnis et animae naturam sine mente adsumpsisse Dominum credunt, Ariani verum carnis tantummodo.*” Facundas, quoted by Pearson. So far then from this venerable symbol of the Church's belief being “decidedly Unitarian” it protests through all me against a cardinal doctrine of Arius.

not until fifty-six years after the Council of Nice which established the Deity of Christ that the personality of the Holy Spirit was decreed." p. 42. "We have thus stated some of the reasons why we reject *the additions made to the Christian faith by a temporal authority*, or that which undertook to govern men not in the meekness of its great Author, but by the strength of coarseness and assumption — the domination of semi-barbarous bishops and semi-barbarous princes." p. 67.

We shall not be accused of misrepresenting the impression designed to be made by the above assertions, (some of which we have underlined) if we interpret them as saying that the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in the unity of the Godhead, originated at the Council of Nice in the year 325, A. D., that it was subsequently completed in its present form, and that it was the joint production of (semi-barbarous) officers of church and state.

Here then we join issue. The doctrine of a Trinity we have already found in the Bible, and we are prepared now to prove that in substance it was held in the Church from the Apostles' times till the council of Nice, as it has been ever since. It was indeed for the first time agreed at that council to adopt the terminology now in use to express our ideas of the great mystery, because it was the first time that it had been formally and seriously

attacked, and it was necessary to frame language such as should exclude heretics from participation in the privileges of the Church. The council of Nice was merely the articulate expression by the whole Church of a consciousness imparted by Christ and his Apostles, of which hitherto no bold opposer had appeared to extort either the stern decree of indignation or the emphatic protest of truth. That this doctrine obtained at and subsequently to the Nicene era a mould and symbols into which it had not been universally cast before, we are quite willing to acknowledge, for this merely places it upon the same footing with other doctrines of Holy Writ. The Bible does not present us anywhere with systematized truth. It was written not for scholars but for the people, yet it is both lawful and necessary to draw forth its sacred teachings, the *raw material*, the native ore, of its truths, and mould them into such a shape as is most suitable to the casts of thought of mankind. The doctrine of the spirituality of God, for example, was as little fixed, defined, systematized, up to the council of Nice as was that of the Trinity. Tertullian, Melito, and many others of the fathers attributed somewhat corporeal to the Deity, and this without being charged with heresy, yet the man who should so boldly venture now would be ranked with Hobbes and Spinoza. It does not matter when the ore

was moulded into shapes of use and beauty provided only it was the pure gold of the mine, and if this doctrine be Bible truth, it might have been enacted yesterday by the Universal Church, as the law of belief for her ministers or members, and that with the "force and arms" of the secular power, or it might never be enacted, and it would still be obligatory as God's truth upon the conscience and obedience of every Christian man. As a matter of fact, however, the assertion that it was not considered the true faith before the council of Nice, is an assertion without any historical basis. We do indeed find traces before that date of the view of Arius, the arch Unitarian, but they were derived from the philosophy of Plato, and not from the Bible.

The Platonists held to a Trinity, as did the Hindoos and many ancient people, but not in the sense in which that doctrine was taught in the New Testament, and enjoined at the Nicene council. The Platonic Trinity consisted of the supreme God, whom Plato also calls Father; the *λογος* or word which is the divine understanding; and the soul, or vital principle of the world; and these views, modified by the influence of the Old Testament, were extensively embraced by Jews living without the bounds of Palestine, who had been educated in the Grecian philosophies. When therefore, Christianity was first made known to them, their pre-convinced

notions of a Trinity were grafted upon the statements of the Evangelists and Apostles, and were to some extent tolerated before the first general council pronounced them erroneous. Arianism is thus but little more than baptized Platonism, and when it culminated to its complete development in the fourth century, it was met by the developed and systematized doctrine of the Trinity as established in the creed of Nisea. If we are to reject the Trinitarian doctrine because the Anti-Nicene fathers would have expressed it in language somewhat varying from each other, we must for a still stronger reason reject the doctrine of Arius, for though something like his view was occasionally held before, particularly by the Hellenists, yet it received its systematic form and expression from him. We have, however, abundant proof that the orthodox doctrine was not latent during the interval that elapsed between the Apostles and the session of the Nicene council. A few extracts from the writings of those days, while they will add materially to the arguments already adduced, may not be unacceptable to those who have the leisure and the candor to examine such subjects for themselves.

Our first witness shall be Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, thirty-seven years after the ascension of our Lord, the disciple and friend of the Apostle

John. He uses the following language in an epistle to the Ephesians :

“There is one physician both fleshly and spiritual; made and not made; God incarnate; both of Mary and of God; first passable, then impassable; even Jesus Christ our Lord. For our God Jesus Christ was, according to the dispensation of God, conceived in the womb of Mary, of the seed of David, by the Holy Ghost. . . . God himself appearing in the form of man for the renewal of eternal life.”

Says Barnabas, another contemporary of the Apostles: (quoted by Horsley:)

“The Lord submitted to suffer for our soul, although he be the *Lord of the whole earth*, unto whom he said the day before the world was finished, Let us make man after our image and our likeness. . . . For if he had not come in the flesh, how could we mortals, seeing him, have been preserved, when they who behold the sun which is to perish, and is the work of his hands, are unable to look directly against its rays?” Of whom can Barnabas be speaking but of God?

Irenæus, born in Asia Minor, educated by Polycarp, who was the disciple of St. John, Bishop of Lyons, A. D. 180, speaks of the *unalterable canon or rule of faith* which *every man received at his baptism*. And he immediately declares what it was in these words: “The church, though it be

dispersed all over the world, from one end of the earth to the other, received from the Apostles and their disciples, the belief in one God, the Father Almighty — and in one Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Ghost, who preached by the prophets — that every knee should bow to Jesus Christ, our Lord, and God, and Saviour, and King. This faith (says Irenaeus) was the same in all the world. The churches in Germany had no other faith or tradition than those in Iberia or Spain, or those among the Celtae, that is France, or in the East, or in Egypt, or in Lybia, or in the middle parts of the world, by which he means Jerusalem and the adjacent churches, which were reckoned to be in the midst of the earth.

Origen shall be our next witness. He was born at Alexandria about A. D. 185, and lived in Palestine, generally acknowledged the first biblical scholar of his age. In his book of Christian Principles, he thus delivers the rule of faith — the things manifestly handed down by the apostolical preaching are these, first, That there is one God; &c. — next, That Jesus Christ, who came into the world, was begotten of the Father before every creature (“begotten before all worlds,” says the Nicene Creed) — in the last times made himself of no reputation, and became man; he who was God,

was made flesh, and as man continued the same God that he was before. They also delivered that the Holy Spirit was associated in honor and dignity with the Father and Son. We will next offer to prove this point.

Tertullian, born about 160, at Carthage, where he lived a Presbyter during his whole life. He gives a portion of the ancient creed, and speaks of it as the rule of faith common to all Christians — “as one only rule of faith unalterable and irreformable, instituted by Christ himself, and there were no disputes in the Church about it but such as heretics introduce, or such as make heretics.” We believe in one God — that that one God hath a Son which is his word — we believe that he was sent by the Father to be born of a virgin, both man and God, the Son of man and the Son of God, and that he was called Jesus Christ. He sent, according to his promise, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. This faith, says he, was the rule of believing from the beginning of the gospel. Our next witness is

Gregory Thaumaturgus, Bishop of Neo Caesarea, in Pontus, born about A. D. 200. Died about A. D. 270. He composed a creed for the use of his own church. It runs thus: There is one God the Father — and one Lord, one of one, God of God — the true Son of the true Father — eternal of

eternal, and one Holy Ghost—the Fountain of Holiness—a perfect Trinity, whose glory, eternity and dominion is no way divided or separated from each other. In this Trinity there is nothing created or servile. The Father was never without the Son, nor the Son without the Spirit. We will adduce as our next witness,

Lucian, a Presbyter of Antioch, who suffered martyrdom A. D. 311. He wrote a confession of faith in opposition to the Sabellians, as follows: We believe, according to the traditions of the Gospels and Apostles, in one God the Father—and in one Lord Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, who is God, God of God—and we believe in the Holy Ghost who is given to believers, &c.

We have also the creeds of several of the Apostolic churches, all in use an indefinite time before the Council of Nice.

The Creed of the Church of *Jerusalem* is given by *Cyril*, who was Bishop of Jerusalem, A. D. 340, in his catechetical discourses upon it. In it the believer professed his faith in “One God, the Father Almighty—and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, the true God, who was incarnate and made man—and in the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.” Next is the

Creed of Caesarea in Palestine, in the profession of which Eusebius says he was baptized and cate-

chised. Eusebius himself proposed this to the Council of Nice. "We believe in one God the Father Almighty — and in one Lord Jesus Christ God of God, who for our salvation was incarnate and suffered — we believe also in one Holy Spirit." Next we find the

Creed of Alexandria: "We believe in one God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ his Son our Lord, God the Word — who came down from heaven and was incarnate — and in the Holy Ghost." It was of this Church that Arius was a presbyter, and in this creed he had probably been baptized and was ordained, and when he renounced his faith, he was deposed by Alexander, his Bishop. After this, the

Creed of Antioch: "I believe in one, only, true God, the Father Almighty — and in Jesus Christ our Lord, very God of very God — who, for our sakes, came and was born of a virgin."

Now here is a chain of credible writers, extending in time from a disciple of St. John himself, down to those who were contemporary with the Council of Nice, and in space reaching from Lyons, in France, to Palestine, and embracing the churches of Carthage and Egypt, besides the creeds, *ipsissimis verbis*, of four ancient Apostolical Churches, and the testimony of the whole is with wonderful accuracy to the symbol adopted subsequently by the

representative Bishops of the church assembled in council at Nice, A. D. 325, as that of the faith once delivered to the saints. Nor if by any strange mental obliquity the language of these writers or any of them should seem not sufficiently clear, is it allowable to dispute on which side they are found. The universal reception of their writings and themselves, at least upon these points, by the church Catholic, as being a part of that church and her faith, and their not being excommunicated as heretics, is sufficient to prove the estimate put upon their exposition of the common faith by their contemporaries and followers, and to convince most sober men of their being Trinitarians. Indeed, if this doctrine were not found in the express language (as well as everywhere implied) of Holy Writ, it would be among the most singular of the phenomena unfolded to us by Anti-Nicene Christian history, that it should be contained in those ancient creeds in such explicit language before a heretic was found to dispute it in manner and form as Arius subsequently did, for creeds were, so to speak, the measure and offspring of heresies; that is, doctrines of Holy Writ were seldom condensed into creeds until the attack of some heretic rendered it necessary for the Church to declare what she had always held upon the subject.

Now can any man examine these authorities

after studying the scripture argument already adduced, remembering, too, that from the assembling of that great council of the Bishops of the fourth century down to the present day, the creed then adopted has been that of nearly all believers in the Christian Revelation, and still doubt whether it be not the genuine faith itself, once delivered to the saints, and committed as a sacred deposit to the preservation under God of that church which is the "pillar and ground of the truth?"

What then becomes of the history of creeds so confidently put forth in the Report? We have reason to complain of the use of assertions so sweeping, and at the same time so unsupported as those of the Report which profess to give an historical account of the origin of these doctrines. They have been many times refuted, and but for the necessity of treating them in a review of the argument before us, we might well have spared ourselves and our readers the trouble of wading through them again. The merest tyro in ecclesiastical history, not to say in common sense must know, that such doctrines could not have originated at Nicea, and if they had they could have attained no prevalence in our day unless supported by Scripture.

We receive the creeds only because they can "be proved by most certain warrant of Scripture,"

and not at all as the authoritative decisions of fallible men like ourselves, and we refer to the religious writers of antiquity to show that our interpretation of the Scripture is no novelty, but that in all ages since the Bible was written it has been believed to be *full* of a Trinity.

CHAPTER VI.

REVIEW OF ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE
ATONEMENT.

THE next subject forced upon us by the authors of "Unitarian Views," is one that we would gladly avoid noticing, were it allowable for us to do so. We approach it with melancholy, amounting to grief that we should be obliged to write one line in this day and country in favor of the proposition that "Jesus Christ has come into the world to save sinners." Few would anticipate from the moderation and the semi-orthodox air that pervades a portion of this Report that it concludes with a denial of the Atonement! Yet so it is.

All our sense of guilt and ingratitude, all our fears of infinite justice and wrath, all the hurried and alarmed questions that burst involuntarily from souls consciously undone by nature and lost, "How shall a man be just with his Maker? Shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" These and a thousand

other voices mute or expressed, find no response in this unsatisfying and lifeless system, and forever upon the world's ear and the brazen heavens, the cry of the soul is the same to its believers that the heathen have uttered unanswered through all time — with what sacrifice shall I appear before God? We believe that Jesus Christ came into the world to answer this question, and for any other mission, Moses or Elias would have been as fit instruments. To deny that the death of Christ was an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of men, is to resolve Christianity into a republication of natural religion, with a fuller historical account, a better authenticated inspiration, and a more elaborate morality than Socrates or Cicero have presented us with, and if “the glorious Gospel of the blessed God” be only this and no more, the martyrs and the ministers, the Bible Societies and the Church have bestowed a very superfluous degree of attention upon it. It is indeed difficult to conceive by what process of reasoning a man could convince himself from the Bible that the death of Jesus Christ was no sacrifice for sin.

We wonder what intense and protracted study, and what acuteness and comprehension of intellect are necessary to enable an honest and pious mind to divest itself of all prejudices of education and of home, to stifle all the wants of the creature and

the sinner, to confute all the arguments of centuries, to prove that Paul, and Peter, and Daniel, and Isaiah were but the amanuenses of nature and not of the Holy Ghost, to tear off the veil from Jewish sacrifices, and hear no voice behind, saying, "A body hast thou prepared *me*. Lo! *I* come to do thy will, O God." To behold the limpid stream of Christian morals flowing from the New Testament and deny that its fountain head is the blood of Christ? Shall we pity the blindness of such a man, or envy his gigantic power? Shall we apply to him the Saviour's reproachful sentence to the Jews when in the self-will of an unsubdued and carnal heart they rejected his message of mercy, "Ye will not come unto *me* that you may have life?" or shall we erect a monument, more durable than brass to that man who is wise enough to discern and refute the errors of Holy Writ, and pure enough to be saved without a Saviour? We wish him joy of his pre-eminence, but we would not for worlds put our soul in his soul's stead. We will examine his proofs, and if we find that after all, they contain nothing new, nothing overwhelming, that they have been many times adduced and answered, that after all he may be wrong, and the Christian world right, then we shall lose our astonishment at the vastness of his mental powers, and deplore that, whatever they are, they should be

prostituted to so dire and destructive a work, as to attempt the overthrow of the faith of humble and pious believers in that "propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." For suppose for one moment, that the doctrine of Atonement is truth, as the Bible teaches and the Church has held for near two thousand years, that both "there is none other name given under heaven among men by which we may be saved than that of Jesus Christ," and that through faith in his blood we receive remission of sins, does it not appear to every reflecting mind that the "madman who scatters arrows, fire-brands and death, and says, 'Am I not in sport?'" is a most exemplary philanthropist compared with that man or that set of men who could tear from its hold this sheet anchor of our hopes in the midst of the storm? And if it be *not* true, why should they attempt to shake our unsophisticated but harmless faith? Is it not among the believers in this doctrine that all the schemes originate that are now and have been for centuries in progress, for the evangelization of the world? Did they not bear the light and the morality of Christianity through Europe and Asia, to America, to the Sandwich Islands, to Borneo, to Greenland, to China, to the negroes of Africa, and the pagans of New Holland?

Is any man's character made worse by this creed, or his salvation endangered?

Shall a man love God less for believing that God has so loved him as to send his "own Son to bear our sins in his own body upon the tree," or shall he hate sin less from a contemplation of the mighty sacrifice which, in the estimation of Jehovah, it demanded: will a man repent less poignantly, or confess fewer sins, or reform his life less, who believes in this?

Why can they not let us alone in our faith? Why should they establish churches and Sunday schools, and publish sermons, and newspapers, and Conference Reports, to prove to us and the world that our faith is vain, and we are yet in our sins? We owe no thanks to the authors of this publication, for inconclusive as its reasoning will appear, its influence, if it have any, can only be to paralyze our motives to good, and uproot the foundations of our most cherished and sacred hopes.

But lest any should say we have misunderstood the meaning of this view among "Unitarian Views," let the Report speak in a sentence or two for itself. "Unitarians hold that, according to the Scriptures, our heavenly Father was always placable; was always ready, willing and able, without violation of his law, to forgive us our sins, on repentance and turning to him. That no satisfaction was ever

demande'd or could have been made," page 57. Again, "This 'satisfaction' is a crude notion of such men as believed that God was such a being as made and appointed some men absolutely to damnation; it is part of what they called 'a plan of salvation.' It is a plan, but of their own invention — they had no word of God for it," page 60. Again, "Unitarians believe that salvation by our Lord's mission is in all things of God's love to his sinful creatures; that Christ was not a substitution for us to bear the wrath of God; that our sins were not imputed to him; that no satisfaction was demanded, and that none was made," page 65.

If we had been by the side of the authors of these sentiments, we should have said to them, If you believe all this, gentlemen, for God's sake keep it to yourselves. Do not whisper it again, even upon the midnight winds, for it might bite like a serpent and sting like an adder some soul for whose salvation you would gladly peril your own! But alas! the words are spoken, and the winds have borne them away to many ears, and we must do what we can to follow them over the track of their desolation.

As we understand the teaching of this publication, it informs us that Christ in his nature was and is a creature, and that his office was that of a very exalted and divinely inspired teacher; "his whole

life, his teaching, his example of obedience, humility, and piety, his reliance and whole trust in God, his sufferings, his death, and his resurrection were an offering for us."

That is, we suppose, these were offered *to us* for our instruction and imitation, for we have already seen that "no satisfaction (to God for our sins) was demanded, and none was made," so that the life and sufferings of Christ could not have been an offering to God. "We are not saved by his death alone," although "the Scriptures do dwell upon his death with peculiar importance as a means of our salvation." "His death and resurrection were the seals of his divine mission." (No; his death could only have been a seal or confirmation of his sincerity.) "His resurrection is dwelt upon by St. Peter and St. Paul as if as necessary as his death," &c. p. 55. In proof of these assertions certain texts are adduced, which it is necessary for us to examine before we proceed. We are referred to Rom. v, 10: "For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved *by his life*," in proof of the statement that "it pleased God that we should have his teachings, and the instruction of his holy life also, as means to save us." By this we understand that there is no especial virtue, i. e. no satisfaction, offering, or

substitution for us in the death of Christ, but his death and his life were means for our salvation, differing if at all, only in degree and not in kind, all being designed for our instruction.

But the text quoted does not mean this. The life spoken of is not that which Christ lived upon earth, but that which he now lives. It might be paraphrased thus: "But if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his living again," i. e. by his resurrection and intercession, as being necessary for the completion of our redemption. We do not well see how the Apostle's language can be understood in any other sense.

But "His resurrection is dwelt upon by St. Peter and St. Paul as if as necessary as his death. Without it, preaching is vain and faith is vain, and 'ye are yet in your sins.'" Certainly we are, for if Christ had not risen from the dead, we should have lacked the final and most powerful proof of his exalted mission, and the most conclusive evidence that his work, whatever it was, was accepted as satisfactory by the Father. And without a minute and tedious examination of the other texts adduced, which treat the importance of the resurrection of our Lord, it suffices to say, that the same remark furnishes a satisfactory explanation

of them all. Take but a single one of them quoted in part, just enough of it appearing to make it seem that the resurrection was more important than the death of Christ. "It is Christ that died — yea, rather that is risen again, who also maketh intercession for us." The meaning of this is determined by a clause at the beginning which the Committee have thought proper to omit. Had it been quoted as Paul wrote it, what he meant to assert would have been sufficiently plain, and it is needless to say that it was not that which this Report attributes to him. "*Who is he that condemneth?*" asks Paul — (who is to sit in judgment upon Christians) — "it is Christ that died, yea rather — (for our consolation's sake in the judgment) — who is risen — at the right hand of God — and maketh intercession for us." The resurrection of Christ is indeed dwelt upon as the great "seal of his divine mission," and to the Apostles it must have seemed of peculiar importance. His followers had been stunned, and bewildered, and scattered by his death. That he was really dead, did not admit of a doubt. He hung for hours upon the cross. The officers were so well satisfied of his death that "they brake not his legs." A wound, mortal (as most think it) to a living man, was made by a spear, in his side. His body was carefully prepared for the tomb, and lay secured

with watch, and stone, and seal, until the third day. Suddenly all are astonished by the report that he had risen again. Rumor follows upon rumor until the evidence of their own senses renders it impossible for his dispersed and disheartened followers to doubt that God had recognized and accepted him, and that they could fight with safety and the full assurance of victory, under his banner. Can we fail to expect that this joyful confirmation of their faith should be thereafter dwelt upon forevermore as the most consolatory and delightful event of their lives, and should occupy, in their estimation, as it must in ours, the chief place amongst all the wonderful and glorious things that he had done? As a proof, therefore, of his divine mission, his resurrection was all important, for without it, we could have had no assurance that his death *was* an expiation for our sins, but it would be strangely inconsistent to attribute the same benefits to the evidence of atonement that belong to the atonement itself. In the text already noticed, we are already "reconciled by his death" before we are "saved by his (subsequent) life."

The *guilt* of sin is taken away by his blood, but its stain and power are removed by his Spirit, purchased by his blood, and secured by his intercession, as it is written, "He ever liveth to make intercession for us," and both of these — both

pardon and sanctification — are essential before we can be “saved.”

In order to establish the main point of this section of the Report, we are next met with some remarks upon the nature and effect of the Jewish sacrifices, as follows:

“No sacrifice of the Old Testament was made *to procure* pardon of itself, unless it were only of a ritual offense. An oblation could not change God. It could not make any compensation, or any benefit to him, or in any possible sense, be of any value to him.” (Is not this equally an argument against prayer?) “Let us not mistake the meaning of sacrifice; surely no one can believe that the smoke of incense of the old ceremonial could in itself affect the God of heaven. ‘In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.’” pp. 58, 59.

We must express our astonishment again at such a use of Scripture. If this comment upon ancient sacrifices means anything, it is adduced for this purpose; that as no sacrifice of the Old Testament was made to procure pardon of itself—so the sacrifice of Christ was not made to procure pardon, and to prove this a single verse is quoted from the very chapter, Heb. x, in which Paul is proving—or his words have no meaning—that *because* of the inefficiency of the Jewish sacrifices

to take away sin, we know that these were emblematical of the great sacrifice which could remove sin! But let the Apostle speak for himself, for this is one of the strongest proof texts for the atonement in the whole Bible, and it may not be amiss to introduce it here. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. For the law HAVING A SHADOW OF GOOD THINGS TO COME, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offer year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshipers once purged, should have had no more conscience of sins. (What is this but the implication that the worshipers of Christ being once purged by his sacrifice, have no more conscience of sins?) But in those sacrifices, there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, BUT A BODY HAST THOU PREPARED ME: (Can this body be for any purpose but the real sacrifice of which the others were the 'shadows?') In burnt-offerings and sacrifices

for sin thou hast had no pleasure. (That is—for this is a quotation by Paul from one of David's Psalms—the Jewish burnt-offerings and sacrifices were typical and inefficient.) Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. . . . By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”—Heb. ix, x.

Now, is it not obvious that the very text which the Committee quote to prove that Christ's death was not an expiatory sacrifice, was written by Paul to prove that it was?

But let us revert to the assertion that “no sacrifice of the Old Testament was made *to procure* pardon of itself, unless it were only of a ritual offense,” etc. Pray, what “ritual offense” was atoned for by the sacrifices of Abel, of Noah, of Abraham and of Job, all offered before the Jewish ritual was established? But who ever asserted that sacrifices *did* promise pardon of other than of “ritual” offenses? If they really expiated sins, there would have been no conceivable use of the sacrifice of Christ; and it was because they could not, as the Apostle argues, that “a body was prepared him.” But one most important purpose they served, besides those which are enumerated in the Report, viz: to “remind him (the offerer) and others of the wickedness of transgression, of the necessity of obedience, and of the forgiving power

and mercy of God." They pointed his faith and his hope to that great sacrifice, which could assure him not only that he had sinned, but that "without shedding of blood was no remission of sins." The use of the word "shadows," by St. Paul, would alone abundantly demonstrate this use of the Jewish sacrifices; but we shall have occasion to refer to them again.

"There is no such statement," continues the Report, page 59, "as that God was reconciled to man by the death of Christ." "We reject the doctrine that God was reconciled to us, or that a satisfaction was made." "God was not reconciled to men by the oblations of the altar, but men were reconciled to God by returning to him," &c.—pp. 59, 61. There can, indeed, be no doubt that men required to be reconciled to God, being "alienated in their minds through wicked works," but it is an entire mistake to say that God did not also require to be reconciled to them, before peace could be made between heaven and earth. The statements of the Report admit this, even while it is asserted that we have no Scripture-warrant for the fact.

"As our Maker, he loved us and made it *our law* to repent of this sin and forsake it; and he made it *his law* that on repentance and returning to him, he would forgive. He never said he wanted any

other reconciliation to us but this.”—p. 63. We will again take the very text with which the Committee have sought to establish this proposition, to prove the opposite:

“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit: that God was in Christ, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God,” &c.—2 Cor. v, 18–21.

Can any candid man read this text and not see that it means God’s anger is laid aside, through Christ, and now we beseech you to give up your hostility to him? The very word reconciliation implies a difference, or alienation, though not necessarily an offense, of both parties. Its use in Matt. v, 23, 24, is final as to its applicability to God’s disposition towards us as well as to ours towards him. “If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remember that thy brother hath aught against thee,—first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” When, therefore, we are urged to “be reconciled to God,” it is by no means inconsistent with the belief that God as well as man is an offended party. Another text referred to but not quoted in the Report, is another

conclusive argument against the entire position. "The Scripture says, *we* were reconciled to God, Rom. v, 10."—page 62. Who would ever have imagined that reference could have been made herein to the following inspired language to prove that God was not hostile to man, did not need to be reconciled, and required only repentance and returning of us, viz., "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son," &c. We are justified—accounted just or innocent—"by his blood, *saved from wrath* through him," and yet, say the Committee, the only reconciliation necessary, with or without Christ, was that we should lay aside our hostility against God. We may safely leave this text without further comment to vindicate its own teaching. "Christ," says the apostle, "~~bath~~ redeemed us from the curse of the law—being made a curse for us." Can it be doubted here, for one moment, that but for Christ man would be accursed of God? But take another which we adduce to show that sacrifices were not mere dramatic representations, but that they were offered for real sins, (not merely for "ritual offenses,") and to appease the anger of God, in other words to reconcile him to men. "And it was so that after the Lord had spoken these words

unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends; for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks, and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, like my servant Job," Job xlii, 7, 8. The Committee should have learned by this time that a universal negative is the hardest of all propositions to prove, and we trust they will weigh their language with greater caution before they again venture to assert that no "sacrifice of the Old Testament was made to procure pardon, in itself, unless it were only of a ritual offense," or that "there is no such statement as that *God was reconciled to man* by the death of Christ." The blood of bulls and of goats could not indeed take away sin, but it was nevertheless offered *for sin* as a "shadow" or "type" of that blood which could take it away, and as such with reflected virtue, it appeased the wrath of God against the transgressor.

CHAPTER VII.

AN ATONEMENT DEMANDED BOTH BY THE
GUILT OF MAN AND THE HOLINESS
OF GOD.

UPON the sixty-third page we find another instance of the confounding of Calvinism, as it is termed, with Trinitarianism similar to one already alluded to in another part of this Review: "We reject the doctrine that Adam's transgression was imputed to us, and we were guilty of it. . . . The artificial notion that we could sin by another, before we had an existence is merely absurd."

The Committee cannot be so well informed, as the public have a right to expect from religious teachers, or they would not thus quietly assume that all who believe in a Trinity believe also in the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity. Trinitarians have ever been and probably forever will be ranged on both sides of this dogma, nor so far as we are aware, has any one thought that his belief in the divinity of Christ and the atonement has been impugned by his being termed either a

Calvinist or an Arminian. It was one of the chief points at issue between the Jesuits and the Jansenists, among the adherents of Rome. The Church of Geneva, of Scotland, of Princeton, and of Andover, affirm it. The Church of England, the Episcopal Church in this country, and, we believe, the Baptist Church, leave it an open question, so far at least that their ministers and members hold either view at their option. And the Methodist Church, both in England and America, is distinctively Arminian. Yet all these hold to a Trinity as the pole star of their faith.

We can scarcely be surprised, however, at this refutation of the error into which the Committee have run, when we recollect that it is a favorite method of the opposers of evangelical religion who are found among nominal Trinitarians themselves, to assume in their attacks that the "doctrines of grace," as some call them, are identical with evangelic truth, so that to controvert the one is to make war upon the other also.

But we are by no means willing to admit that the great doctrine, with which this of the imputation of Adam's sin seems in the succeeding remarks to be confounded is alike matter of indifference among the worshipers of a Trinity.

In denying that our race fell from its pristine purity in Adam, if not as its representative and

federal head, at all events, as its father and natural progenitor, and that all we are born the inheritors from our first parent, of a nature, marred and disfigured, and corrupt through sin, just as we inherit from Adam two hands or two feet, the Report attacks not the believers in election and predestination only, but the faith of the whole Universal Church of God. We again quote from the Report itself:

“God made us as we are, imperfect and liable to sin. . . . Now Unitarians do not believe that God has made man without any good in him, wholly inclined to all evil. They do not believe that he comes into the world liable to any punishment, as he has committed no sin.” This last sentence is an erroneous inference, though, doubtless, an honest one, from a passage which the Committee had just quoted from an article of the Church of England, as follows: “Original sin . . . is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man . . . whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness . . . and, therefore, in every person born into this world it (*i. e.* original sin) deserveth God’s wrath and damnation.” It will be seen that the grammatical antecedent of this last clause (which alone the Committee have quoted) is “Original Sin,” and the article does not say, therefore, that the subjects of this corruption of nature at their

birth deserve (much less "are liable to") punishment. The intention of the framers of the article seems rather to have been to show, in the language of St. Paul, "Original Sin" to be "exceeding sinful," by asserting that it was repugnant to the holiness of God and deserved his wrath. But to proceed with our extracts from the Report:

"He (man) is capable from his nature of obedience by God's grace." (Were we disposed for verbal criticism, we might pause a moment to inquire what is the meaning of "capable from nature by God's grace?" but we will take for granted that the signification intended was "the nature which we have received by or through God's grace makes us capable of obedience.") "Else to address the commandment to him would be vain; and to punish him for disobedience would be unjust." This is the first intimation that we have seen throughout the whole of "Unitarian Views," that men are to be punished for disobedience, and although we hail it as a symptom of decided "progress," yet we confess we do not quite see how it is to be rendered consistent with all that we have read about *God needing no reconciliation to man*. But if, indeed, man be "capable from his nature of obedience" to the divine law, it is a most important fact, and would go far to shake our faith in the atonement. We have not so read the Bible.

That holy book teaches that "God made men upright, but they have sought out many inventions," *i. e.* many *wicked* inventions, for they are contrasted with the upright character in which man (Adam) was created. The fifth chapter of Romans is very clear upon this subject: "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. . . . For the judgment was by one to condemnation. . . . For if by one man's offense death reigned by one. . . . Therefore as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation. . . . For as by one man's disobedience many (*οι πολλοι*, the many,) were made sinners."—Rom. v, 12–16, 17, 18, 19.

"The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." "There is not a just man on earth who doeth good and sinneth not." "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other so that *ye cannot do the things that ye would.*" "*No man can come unto me except the Father who hath sent me draw him.*" "If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

Such are the teachings of the word of God upon this subject, and if these texts, and many more of like import, do not reveal that human nature, since

the transgression of Adam, is corrupt and unable, without divine aid, to render the "obedience" ascribed to it by "Unitarian Views," it is difficult to conceive how these doctrines could be set forth in such language that a meaning directly the opposite to the one intended should not be drawn from it. But we are informed, if man, from his nature, be not "capable of obedience," to "address the commandments to him would be vain, and to punish him for disobedience, unjust." So abstractly speaking it would, and here lies the importance of the very doctrine against which this Report is arguing — the atonement. That no man can obey the divine law in a manner satisfactory to the Great Lawgiver, is clearly announced in the texts we have just quoted; and we do not wonder that the Committee are then met by a difficulty that upon their scheme is wholly insurmountable. They had already denied the Divinity of Christ, and of course his atonement. The denial of human depravity must follow as a simple necessity, no matter how clear are the teachings of the Bible to the contrary. For they were driven to this alternative; they must either deny that God was just, that the Bible itself was from him, or that it contained the doctrine of human depravity. The decision was sufficiently facile for those who had already declared their inability to discover, in Holy

Scripture, that Christ, "is the true God and eternal life," or that he has "borne our sins in his own body on the tree." Original sin must be given up. Man is "capable of his own nature of obedience" to God's laws. Otherwise law and its sanctions are tyranny. But admit for a moment the truth of an atonement, and we find ourselves at once extricated from this horrible dilemma. "Pay this debt," exclaims the law, "to the uttermost farthing." "I cannot," replies the delinquent; "through the circumstances in which I was (providentially) born, I am a bankrupt." "Then," says the Lawgiver, "I provide thee with a *surety*, a *ransom*, a *redeem—er*. Now, pay thy debt." But the Committee, prepared to deny that Christ is a Redeemer, must also deny (*in the very face of Scripture*) that there is any ruinous debt. Man is abundantly able, "*without* the Father draw him," "from his nature, of obedience," and therefore he needs no atonement. Such is the revelation of this "Report," a statement we venture to pronounce, in the most unqualified language, directly and thoroughly opposed to every one of the inspired writers who has written upon the subject. The next sentence from the Report we give entire, as from the boldness and confidence of its language, we suppose peculiar importance is attached to it, and we are by no means disposed to shrink from a

review of any assertion which we deem inconsistent with the truth.

“To make a being with a nature wholly inclined to evil, and when he commits evil (which of course he must do with such a nature) to demand a satisfaction over and beyond his sincere repentance and forsaking of sin, is to do what would certainly not consist with man’s mercy . . . how shall we permit anything written by men to make us ascribe such to the mercy of the Most High?” No one has ever said that God made man “with a nature wholly inclined to evil.” We do not even believe with this Committee that “God made us as we are, imperfect and liable to sin.” We think either of these opinions impugns the holiness of God, of that great and pure Creator, who when reviewing the works of his hands pronounced them “good,” but when he had made man “in his own image and likeness,” (not “as he is, imperfect and liable to sin,”) pronounced him “very good.” We believe that “God made man upright”—that man fell into sin, and thus corrupted his posterity, who inherited sin from Adam just as they would have inherited scrofula—that while God’s holiness could brook no intercourse with this polluted race, and his justice must condemn them to hell for their crimes, his love prompted him to give “his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him

might not perish, but might have everlasting life" — that man's probation now is not like Adam's, whether he will *stand*, but it is whether, as a being already fallen, he will *rise* — and finally that those who obstinately refuse mercy and holiness will perish. "But it "would not consist," say the Committee, "with our notions of man's mercy — how then shall we impute such (such what?) to the mercy of the Most High?" Suppose we change the venue then and bring the case before the *justice* of the Most High. Most of the errors of this class arise from ignoring the justice of God, and making him the parental, only, and not also, the judicial governor of the world. It cannot indeed, be disputed that God does bestow upon us the bounties and the consideration that belong to the parental relation, and, in this point of view, he is repeatedly termed our "Heavenly Father" in the Bible, and a parent's tenderness and love are often ascribed to him. But is it wise, therefore, or rational to close our eyes to the fact that God is quite as often exhibited as a Judge, and will a Judge pardon merely upon our sincere repentance and forsaking of the crime for which we are tried? Was it not contained even in one of the ten laws given for all mankind upon Sinai: "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and

fourth generations?" Is not this law, and does not its ministration imply a Judge and punishment? Does not the New Testament constantly speak of Christ's coming again to judge the earth? Let us not then endanger our hopes of eternal life by fixing our attention too exclusively upon the divine mercy. *That mercy has shown itself once for all, in the atonement of the Son of God who "was once offered to bear the sins of many."*

God has now (if we may so speak) shut up himself to this mode of forgiving men through the merits of Christ, and out of Christ God has no mercy. God, "the Judge of all the earth" himself provides the ransom for our forfeit souls, and woe be to the wretch who refuses to avail himself of it. A "sincere repentance, and forsaking of sin" will do sometimes (not always) between a child and its parent, but it will not do at all between a criminal and the Judge. "He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world by that man whom he hath ordained." Let any one read Rev. xx, 11-15, and see if we have not to deal with a Judge as well as a Father, and then see if he cannot find a fitter plea to present to the last dread tribunal than repentance and reformation. We may appeal fearlessly to the Committee themselves, and ask them if there be a judge on earth who pardons all criminals who repent and reform?

The reasons why, under human governments, this cannot be, based upon the supremacy of the law—nay, upon human nature itself—are perfectly satisfactory to every reflecting mind; yet, although without question, God is revealed as the *Judge* of men and human actions, in his court alone, we are not to be treated as *men*, free and responsible for crime, but as if we were dumb beasts, which need to be disciplined only, and are not fit subjects for judicial punishment, because their crimes and inferiority can form no precedent for others, or weaken their respect for law and duty! It needs not that we should pause here to show that man cannot repent and reform, save through the atonement of Jesus Christ. This follows from the texts already quoted, in which man's depravity and inability are written with a sunbeam.

But we desire to call attention to the numerous instances in which "faith" is spoken of in the Bible as a prerequisite to pardon: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the *wrath of God* abideth on him." God, then, is estranged from man, who, by sin, is the object of his "wrath;" and if man "believe" not in Christ, this wrath "abideth on him." Here, surely, faith is required, "over and beyond sincere repentance and forsaking of sin," and faith necessarily implies, as

it is used in the Bible, an atonement. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,"—Rom. v, 1—not being justified by repentance and amendment. These, indeed, are required, but it is also required that we should *renounce our trust in them*, by receiving, through faith, a free pardon as sinners whose punishment has been borne for us. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."—Gal. ii, 16.

Such texts as these, which abound in the Bible, prove to a complete demonstration, that God did not "make it *our* law (only) to repent of sin and forsake it," nor "make it *his* law that on repentance and turning to him (only) he would forgive."—page 63.

God's law everywhere demands "faith" as well as repentance and forsaking sin; that "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so was the Son of Man lifted up, that whoso believeth in him might not perish but have everlasting life." The word "justified," in the texts above quoted from Galatians and Romans, and in many other texts, is strictly a judicial word, descriptive of the

system adopted by a judge in dealing with a criminal, imposing upon him such terms of forgiveness as he may, consistently with the behests of justice, and the terms God offers to man are the relying upon the sacrifice of Christ as a substitute for our own death, for "without the *shedding of blood*," not merely without repentance and amendment, "*is no remission of sins*." These dispositions, upon which so much stress is laid in the Report, are indeed always required, and sometimes are mentioned alone, and so are other terms, as in such texts as "if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," &c., where confession alone is required, and not repentance and reformation, but where, at different times and places, several prerequisites to pardon are demanded, as repentance, confession, faith, love, holiness, is it not obvious that *all* these are required by our judge? Then we have only to assign them their proper position as antecedents and consequents, causes and effects, and we pronounce, and not we alone, but the word of God pronounces faith in the atoning blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to be the antecedent and cause of all the rest, so "that whatsoever is not of faith is of sin," and, therefore, we are "justified by faith and have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

CHAPTER VIII.

CHRIST A SUBSTITUTION FOR US.

WE come now, in the last place, to a consideration of the atonement itself as a doctrine of the Bible, and, as before, we insert the entire passage of the Report, in which it is denied, not only that we may not be accused of perversion or misconstruction, but that the Committee may have the full benefit of their strongest statements. For ours is a system which needs not to fear the light. It has had too many antagonists during the past centuries, and rests too firmly upon the rock of ages to require it to shrink from any investigation :

“Unitarians believe that salvation by our Lord’s mission is in all things of God’s love to his sinful creatures: that Christ was not a substitution for us to bear the wrath of God: that our sins were not imputed to him: that no satisfaction was demanded and none was made. Some of them believe that whatever is said of sacrifice in reference to the death of Christ is merely figurative, so far as the

similitude to the Jewish oblations is indicated: while others (among whom is the writer of this Report) believe that there was a real expiation in love to us: not to affect God, but in his wise and incomprehensible providence to accomplish our salvation."—page 65.

"The writer of this Report," here distinguishes himself even from the other two members of the Committee,—and here is the ground of the inquiry made near the commencement of our Review,—whether even these three Unitarians, leaving out all the rest of their brethren on this side the Atlantic and the other, were unanimous in the "Views" thus given to the public? And what is the subject of difference between them,—a difference, perhaps, extending to the Committee whose joint work this document purports to be? It is not a question of church government or ritual merely, but it is no less than the vital question whether "a real expiation" has ever been offered for the sins of men, upon which they cannot agree: whether all that is said of Christ's death being a sacrifice is figurative or literal: whether we have a Saviour or not. Yet, they are much offended if we will not denominate them a church,—a church of Christ,—and they have no confidence in the creeds of men. Even "the writer of this Report," who believes in "a real expiation," does not think

it was intended "to affect God," though he reads in his Bible that "God is angry with the wicked every day." He believes in an "expiation" that has its beginning, middle and end in man,—“a real expiation,” that has no reference to guilt or punishment. Expiation, according to Webster, means “the act of atoning for a crime; the act of making satisfaction for an offense; atonement, satisfaction;” yet our author believes in “a real expiation,” but “that no satisfaction was demanded and none was made.” If in Christ’s death was made “a real expiation,” it must have been an expiation or “satisfaction” for real (judicial) guilt, offered to that Being under whose judicial government the guilt was incurred. It must also be something “over and beyond sincere repentance and forsaking of sin,” something bearing a much closer “similitude to the Jewish oblations” than “Unitarian Views” have all along admitted to be possible. “The writer of this Report” has here made an admission that crumbles his whole theory to atoms. And we thank God, for his soul’s sake, that he has made it; and though he pronounces its effect upon man’s salvation “incomprehensible,” we can tell him that it is very comprehensible to all whom the Spirit of God has made to feel in their own souls that “sin is the abominable thing that God hateth,”—Jer. xliv, 4, and that the

“anger of God burns to the lowest hell,”—Deut. xxxii, 22, against it and is not quenched but in the atoning blood of Christ. But although we confess ourselves entirely unable to reconcile this concession of “the writer” with the statement in the same extract that “Christ’s death was not a substitution for us; that no satisfaction was demanded, and none was made,” we will turn our attention to this statement as an article in the Unitarian creed. We have already treated it so far as was necessary to show the relation subsisting between the Jewish sacrifices and that of Christ, and we refer to the entire Epistle to the Hebrews, any who have still doubts upon that point. Paul wrote that Epistle, as its title purports, to the Jews, to show them that their ritual system was abolished, and their typical offerings realized in “the offering of the body of Christ once for all,” and henceforth no priest or sacrifice was necessary to remind Jews or Gentiles of the expiation that our sins demanded.

It will perhaps be acknowledged that faith in Christ is everywhere required in the New Testament at least. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned,” stands at the door of the Church of Christ as the condition of entrance to every sinner. “See here is water,” said the Eunuch to Philip; “what

doth hinder me from being baptized?" "If thou believest, thou mayest." "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," and straightway he baptized him.

Now this faith that is requisite to the salvation of man, cannot be belief in the life of Christ as an example, for the lowest angel in heaven, absolutely free from sin would have done as well, and there were no need for the being next to God leaving his exalted position and taking the body of a man merely to set us a good example. So far as we are acquainted with his history, faith in Enoch would have done as well as faith in Christ, if his morality had been all in which we were to believe, and the incarnation itself would have been a useless machinery. Neither could this mean faith in the death of Christ considered merely as a martyrdom, for many of the noble army of martyrs rivaled or even excelled their Lord in the steadiness with which they confronted death. No military or naval hero ever met death with more calmness and self-possession than did the proto-martyr St. Stephen. Not a fear or a doubt seems to have disturbed his serenity, nor did any pangs of death extort from him a groan. No earnest petition to heaven, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me," sought to avert the catastrophe; and no exclamation of agony, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me," marked the successful onset of the foe at the last

conflict. Yet we are not called upon to believe in Stephen, but "we have redemption through *His* blood, even the forgiveness of our sins." — Ep. i, 7.

Christ was indeed both a martyr and an example, but he was more also, for even his herald announced him as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world," and in the triumphant song of the elders and angels in the book of Revelation, he is adored as the "Lamb that *was slain*," and had redeemed them by his blood from every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. Here is certainly a very striking "similitude to the Jewish oblation," and if it be merely figurative, and not as "the writer of this Report" professes as his own faith "a real expiation," it is difficult to ascertain upon what similarity the comparison is based.

The doctrine of the death of Christ being "a substitution" for the death of sinning men is the foundation stone of the Christian religion. If the Scriptures do not teach this they teach nothing. Take a concordance, and look out the various texts enumerated under the words, "death," "blood," "sacrifice," "offering," "faith," "redeem," &c., and if they do not without one word of comment, reveal that atonement which the Christian Church has all along held as the dearest article of her faith, then we have no more to say. The minds of the writer and readers of this review are formed in such

different moulds and of such different materials that to come to the same understanding in reference to any one truth in the universe, will be an utter impossibility. Lest the reader should not have access to a Concordance of the Bible, we will find for him a few of these passages ourselves.

Christ is the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." "His blood was shed for many for the *remission of sins*." (Is not that to affect God?) He "was once offered to bear the sins of many." He "bore the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." He "bore our sins in his own body upon the tree." He "was delivered for our offenses." "In him we have redemption through his blood—even the forgiveness of our sins." He "appeared once to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." He "is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." "Except ye eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you." "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life." "Elect unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Christ." "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." We might pursue the enumeration of such passages indefinitely, and we quite agree with "the writer of this Report," that they look very much like a "real expiation," in opposition

to those of his *confrères* who deny that any satisfaction was demanded, and that any was made. One more text is too important in this connection to be overlooked, as it frequently is, in an investigation of this subject. In it St. Paul seems to have resolved by an illustration, to remove every possibility of doubt and cavil as to whether the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was "a substitution" for us or not. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commended his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—Rom. v, 6, 8. "For scarcely for a righteous man—(a just and honest man)—will one die; yet peradventure for a good man—(a benevolent man, a benefactor)—some would even dare to die." That is *instead of* a benefactor or friend, as Damon being willing to die for Pythias, or Pythias for Damon; "but while we were yet sinners, Christ died for (instead of) us." (How much greater then the love of God.) Such is the argument of the Apostle, and it is conclusive.

Just as a friend will die as a "substitute" to save his friend from death, a husband for his wife, a mother instead of her child, so Christ died "while we were yet sinners" "a substitute" to save us.

We have now presented quite as fully as was necessary to meet the arguments of "Unitarian Views," the positive proofs from the Bible of the doctrine of atonement. The moral argument still remains untouched, nor is it requisite that we should open it. If a doctrine be once substantiated from the Scriptures, we must either receive it as an article of our faith or renounce the Bible. There is no alternative course to pursue, and it is better a thousand times to give up the Bible as a divine revelation, than, however sincerely, to pervert its most sacred and obvious meaning, (the Christian world being the judge) and to deny its most fundamental doctrines.

We confess ourselves still under the influence of the prejudices of an early education upon this subject. We plead guilty to the acquisition of our present sentiments amidst domestic endearments of our childhood's home, and under the wholesome instructions of a worthy man of God, and a Sunday School teacher, whose fathers had trained them in the same belief that we have humbly and feebly advocated. Nor are we deterred from this acknowledgment by the closing sentences of "Unitarian Views," which ascribe, with much confidence, the monopoly of all true bravery to those who have succeeded in divesting themselves of such childish trammels and dreams. Hear the language, and

admire the calm superiority to men of human mould, with the self-possession that Cato himself might have envied, that shine forth in the modest assumption of all moral heroism, with which the Committee, or perhaps "the writer of this Report," concludes his extermination of "the creeds of men:"

"To pause about what we have heard in the prayers of our fathers and mothers, seems almost like disrespect; and it requires heroism to *search* if it be true. It takes strength to unfetter the reason and strike for truth only; but this is an age of moral courage, self-reliance and love of truth. God loves the man that loves the truth; God loves a brave man, and a man who is brave enough to come through ranks and throngs of bishops, emperors, kings and parliaments, to inquire of HIM for truth."—pp. 71, 72.

Heroic Committee! We should, indeed, commiserate you, if the result should prove that you have been brave enough to go through "ranks and throngs of bishops, emperors, kings and parliaments," leaving behind you the Church of Christ, now some eighteen centuries old, only to land in the quagmire of error or the domains of everlasting night.

But are all believers in a Trinity and an atonement indeed such cowards, that through the ages they have not ventured to look face to face upon

the God of truth, save with the sanction of the temporal authority? Were the noble army of martyrs, who went to the stake because, in the language of a heathen historian, "they sang hymns to Christ as a God," so deficient in true courage? Was Galileo, (a believer in the Trinity,) when in the very face of his persecutors for a truth which he communicated as by a revelation from heaven, he reiterated his assertion, "Still it moves!"—was he without bravery? Was Athanasius, in the midst of a council that had almost imposed Arianism upon the Church, when he uttered his lofty battle-cry, "Athanasius against the world!" and conquered? Was Lord Bacon a coward when, in the simple and sublime exordium to the *Novum Organum*, he declares calmly his conviction that the philosophy of the world was all wrong, and that the book he then wrote and issued, would be the treasure-house of knowledge for the generations to come? Was John Milton destitute of moral courage, when he learned that the English Jesuits, in Rome, had formed a plot against him, and, nevertheless, returned to the Eternal City, "took no steps to conceal either his person or his character: and, for the space of two months, again openly defended, as he had done before, the reformed religion in the very metropolis of popery?" Did Newton lack courage and the love of truth when,

with the vision of a seer, he gazed upon the stars in their orbits and bade them reveal to man the unseen influences that guided them, while yet he confessed himself but "a child picking up pebbles upon the shore of the great ocean of truth?"

God does indeed "love a brave man," but not the man who measures his bravery by the great gulf that divides him from "the creeds of men." If true courage is to be sounded by the lead and line of our abnegation of the holy impartings of a mother's love and the fundamental verities of the Catholic faith, this respectable Committee do not go far enough. The ground they tread upon has been long ago occupied and deserted for still higher attainments in heroism. With such a guage of courage, the Deist is altogether a braver man than any member of this honorable Committee, and the Atheist is pre-eminently *l'un chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*.

"Come over to us," say the believers in "Unitarian Views;" "we have cast away the shackles of our parents' faith; we are brave men; we love the truth, and God loves us. By uniting with us ye will overcome your cowardice, and break through ranks of kings and emperors, to look upon truth and become brave, which ye never were before, and God will love you."

But we cannot hearken to this invitation, for it

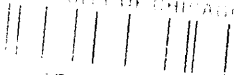
only repeats, in different language, the glozed untruth of the first tempter to the first man, which, for six thousand years, has sounded in the hearts of the self-deceived and the boaster, *Ye shall not surely die, but ye shall be as Gods, knowing Good from Evil.*

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